PRESENTING... THE TRIUMPHANT RETURN OF...
THE CHALLENGERS OF THE UNKNOWN!

ADVENTURE COMICS®

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NO. 493
NOV.

BRAND NEW! the SECRET ORIGIN OF THE MEN WHO LIVE ON BORROWED TIME!

EXTRA! LANA LANG MEETS THE LEGION of SUPER-HEROES!

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PRESENTING ANOTHER SENSATIONAL ISSUE OF

ADVENTURE COMICS®

No. 493 November, 1982

***** Editor: Carl Gafford *****

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THERE IS A LINE MOST PEOPLE WILL NOT CROSS--A LINE WHICH MARKS THE BOUNDARY BETWEEN THE SAFE AND FAMILIAR AND THOSE HORRORS THAT WE FEAR! NOW THERE ARE FOUR MEN WHO DARE TO JOURNEY BEYOND THAT BORDER OF THE FRIGHTENING, FOUR MEN LIVING ON BORROWED TIME...

CHALLENGERS OF THE UNKNOWN™

ROCKY DAVIS-- HEAVYWEIGHT BOXING CHAMP

PROF HALEY-- DEEP SEA DIVER

RED RYAN-- DAREDEVIL SHOWMAN

ACE MORGAN-- CRACK TEST PILOT

HOW DID THESE FOUR COME TO JOIN FORCES & WHY DO THEY GO WHERE OTHERS FEAR TO TREAD? NOW THE STORY CAN BE TOLD...

WHEN DESTINY CALLS!

DEDICATED TO THE POWER AND MAJESTY OF JACK KIRBY

BOB ROZAKIS, WRITER ★ GEORGE TUSKA, PENCILLER ★ ANDY MUSHYNSKY, INKER ★ MILT SNAPINN, LETTERER ★ CARL GAFFORD, EDITOR/COLORIST

THE FOUR MEN WHO WILL BECOME THE CHALLENGERS OF THE UNKNOWN HAVE NOT YET MET, BUT DESTINY IS EVEN NOW CONSPIRING TO BRING THEM TOGETHER! DESTINY... AND THE HOST OF A POPULAR TV PROGRAM...

INCREDIBLE PEOPLE

THAT'S OUR SHOW FOR THIS EVENING, FOLKS! WE HOPE YOU ENJOYED RELIVING THE ADVENTURES OF THESE THREE *INCREDIBLE PEOPLE!*

BE WITH US NEXT WEEK WHEN WE'LL HAVE FOUR *MEN* WHOSE EXPLOITS HAVE TAKEN THEM TO EVERY CORNER OF THE GLOBE--ON LAND, UNDER THE SEA, AND IN THE AIR!

TILL THEN, FROM CAESAR'S PALACE IN LAS VEGAS, I'M *TED SKINNER*--

--AND I'M *BETTY TIMMONS!*

SEE YOU NEXT WEEK WITH MORE "INCREDIBLE PEOPLE"!

WRONG, MR. TV— "PERSONALITY"...

...ONE OF YOUR GUESTS IS *NOT* GOING TO APPEAR AS SCHEDULED!

HAHAHAHAHA

FIVE DAYS LATER, AT A SMALL AIRPORT IN TEXAS...

TALK ABOUT COINCIDENCES!

THAT'S GOT TO BE WHO I THINK IT IS! THERE CAN'T BE TWO FACES LIKE THAT!

HEY, CHAMP--ROCKY DAVIS!

THAT'S THE NAME, PAL! WHATTA YOU WANT-- MY AUTOGRAPH?

ONLY IF YOU WANT MINE! I'M RED RYAN!

RYAN! AIN'T YOU THE GUY WHAT CLIMBS OFFICE BUILDINGS?

BUT, BEFORE RED CAN ACKNOWLEDGE ONE OF HIS CLAIMS TO FAME...

GENTLEMEN, I'M PROF HALEY! WEIRD AS IT SOUNDS, I'M HEADING FOR LAS VEGAS TO BE ON THE SAME TV SHOW YOU TWO ARE!

OH YEAH-- HALEY! I READ YOUR B-- I MEAN, I HEARD OF YOU!

NOWHERE NEAR THE ODDS OF THE FOUR OF US BEING HERE, MR. RYAN!

TRAVEL

THIS IS WILD! I WONDER WHAT THE ODDS ARE ON THE THREE OF US ALL BEING IN THE SAME BACKWOODS AIRPORT!

a

AND IN CASE ANY OF YOU FORGOT THE *OTHER* NAME LISTED IN *TV GUIDE* WITH YOURS, I'M *ACE MORGAN!*

I WAS JUST GETTING READY TO *FLY* TO VEGAS BUT I GUESS IT'S NOT GOING TO BE A SOLO *FLIGHT!*

WELL, GUYS, WHAT DO SAY TO A *FREE RIDE* IN MY BRAND-NEW JET?

A "*BRAND-NEW JET*", EH, MORGAN?

YUP--BUT DON'T WORRY--ALL THE KINKS ARE OUT OF IT! SO THEY *TELL ME.*

"*I AIN'T WORRIED! I JUST WANNA PICK SOMETHING UP BEFORE WE GO...*"

I CHRISTEN THEE--THE "*LUCKY ACE*"!

LUCKY ACE

SPLASH

HEY!

WHAT'RE YOU--*NUTS?* THAT BLASTED *SODA POP* IS EATING THE PAINT RIGHT OFF THE PLANE!

I'D BELT YOU RIGHT IN THAT DUMB *PUSS* IF I WASN'T SURE *YOU* COULD DECK *ME* WITH ONE HAND!

HEH! DAVIS IS THE *STEREOTYPICAL DUMB JOCK!*

LUCKY ACE

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THIS IS SOME PIECE OF MACHINERY, MORGAN! IT MUST'VE SET YOU BACK A BUNDLE!

NAH--I PUT IT ALL ON THE "PLASTIC"!

I'LL BE MAKING "CONVENIENT MONTHLY PAYMENTS" TILL I'M 106 YEARS OLD!

KRA-BOOM!

UH...THIS IS YOUR CAPTAIN SPEAKING! WE ARE ENTERING AN AREA OF *TURBULENCE* SO I'M TURNING ON THE *SEATBELT SIGN!*; BING!;

HEY, HOW ABOUT A GREAT-LOOKIN' STEWARDESS TO SHOW ME HOW TO USE MY *LIFE PRESERVER!*

SORRY, MY MOTHER COULDN'T MAKE IT THIS TIME!

HANG ON, FELLAS! I'M GOING TO TAKE 'ER UP ABOVE THESE CLOUDS!

VROOOM

I THINK I'M GONNA TOSS MY COOKIES!

SUDDENLY...

MORGAN--YOU SURE YOU KNOW HOW TO FLY THIS BIRD?!

I'D TAKE THE THING BACK IF I WAS YOU!

DO BEARS SLEEP IN THE WOODS? OF COURSE--

--BUT THE CONTROLS HAVE GONE HAYWIRE!

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I'LL DO THAT--IF I GET THE CHANCE! BUT NOTHING'S RESPONDING!

EMERGENCY KIT

IT'S LIKE SOMEBODY PULLED THE PLUG ON THE PLANE!

AS IF FULFILLING THE CLICHÉ ABOUT WHAT GOES UP, THE PLANE PLUMMETS EARTHWARD...

WITHIN THE PLUNGING PLANE EACH MAN IS ALONE WITH HIS THOUGHTS...

I FOUGHT MY WAY TO THE TOP...AND NOW I'M LOSING IT ALL TO A HUNK OF METAL AND WIRES!

SO MUCH RESEARCH LEFT UNDONE!

FACE FACTS, RYAN--THIS IS ONE GAMBLE YOU AREN'T GOING TO WIN!

SOME CRACKERJACK PILOT I TURNED OUT TO BE!

IF ANYBODY KNOWS ANY GOOD PRAYERS--SAY 'EM FAST!

FOR PERHAPS HALF A MINUTE, THE MOUNTAINSIDE IS FILLED WITH THE SOUND OF IMPACT, OF METAL CRASHING INTO ROCK, OF WOOD BEING SPLINTERED...

KRAAAKKK!

KRASH

KRASHHH

THWABAMM

...FOLLOWED BY A SILENCE LIKE THE GRAVE.

EVEN THE BIRDS AND ANIMALS ARE SILENT, AS IF HOLDING THEIR BREATH, WAITING...

...WAITING...

...WAITING...

THWAM

MORGAN, YOU'RE ONE HELL OF A PILOT! I *NEVER* THOUGHT I'D BE WALKIN' AWAY FROM THAT!

YOU AND ME BOTH, CHAMP!

GOD--I CAN'T BELIEVE IT! NOT A *SCRATCH* ON ANY OF US!

YEAH--I FALL DOWN IN MY *BATHTUB* AND END UP IN WORSE SHAPE!

I'LL TAKE YOUR BATHTUB ANY TIME, KID!

CHECK THIS OUT -- I OUGHT TO DO A COMMERCIAL -- MY WATCH IS STILL TICKING!

IT'S TICKING AWAY BORROWED TIME, RYAN!

WE SHOULD ALL BE DEAD...BUT WE'RE LIVING ON BORROWED TIME!

HEY, GUYS -- THE SILENT PROF *DOES* KNOW HOW TO SPEAK!

BUT YOU SOUND LIKE *ROD SERLING*, HALEY! WHAT D'YA THINK THIS IS -- *THE TWILIGHT ZONE*?

I DON'T KNOW! I JUST FEEL... *WEIRD*!

MEANWHILE, NOT TOO FAR AWAY...

I DON'T NEED A CATALOG TO TELL ME *THIS* GIZMO ISN'T ON THE *PARTS LIST*!

IT'S SOME KIND OF REMOTE CONTROL DEVICE --

--WHICH MEANS, GENTLEMEN, THAT MY PLANE DID NOT JUST *HAPPEN* TO FREEZE UP!

SOMEBODY PLANTED THIS THINGAMABOB ABOARD...

...WHICH MEANS SOMEBODY TRIED TO KILL US!

A CHALLENGE TO BE FACED NEXT ISSUE AS THE SECRET ORIGIN OF THE CHALLENGERS OF THE UNKNOWN CONTINUES IN ADVENTURE #494! JOIN US IN THIRTY DAYS!

SUPERBOY

The ADVENTURES of [redacted] WHEN HE WAS A BOY

WE ALL KNOW HOW LANA LANG, SUPERBOY'S BEST FRIEND, HAS ALWAYS WANTED TO BE MORE THAN THAT AND BECOME HIS STEADY GIRL FRIEND! IF SO, WHY DOES SHE ONE DAY SPURN THE BOY OF STEEL AND TURN TO A SUPER-VISITOR FROM ANOTHER WORLD? YES, STRANGE AS IT MAY APPEAR, ONE DAY LANA REJECTS SUPERBOY FOR ANOTHER SUPER-YOUTH! IT ALL HAPPENS IN THE AMAZING ADVENTURE...

LANA LANG AND THE LEGION OF SUPER-HEROES!

HOLY COW! YOU WANT ME TO PATROL XANTHU FOR YOU, STAR BOY?

YES, SUPERBOY! I'M BUSY WEAVING A GIFT FOR MY GIRL FRIEND LANA.

FLAME-CLOTH CLOTHING... RARE JEWELS... SUPER-BOUQUETS! STAR BOY IS DEVOTING ALL HIS TIME AND SUPER-POWERS TO MY HAPPINESS! AREN'T YOU JEALOUS, SUPERBOY?

STORY BY OTTO BINDER
ART BY GEORGE PAPP

IN SMALLVILLE, YOU WILL OFTEN FIND SUPER-BOY DOING A GOOD DEED AROUND TOWN IN HIS USUAL SUPER-STYLE!

TO SAVE THE SMALLVILLE HOSPITAL SOME MONEY, I PROMISED TO CUT THEIR LAWN! AT THE SAME TIME, IT'S "ENTERTAINING" THE PATIENTS!

WOW! LOOK AT SUPERBOY USING THAT GIANT SCYTHE HE MADE!

AND WHERE SUPERBOY GOES, YOU CAN USUALLY FIND LANA LANG ON THE SCENE WITH HER CAMERA...

NOW SUPERBOY'S USING HIS SUPER-BREATH TO BLOW ALL THE GRASS CUTTINGS INTO A NEAT PILE! HE'S WONDERFUL!

HI, LANA! NO TIME FOR A CHAT! I HAVE OTHER JOBS TO DO! 'BYE!

HE DIDN'T EVEN NOTICE MY NICE NEW DRESS I ESPECIALLY WORE FOR HIM! HE DOESN'T KNOW HOW MAD I AM ABOUT HIM...SIGH!

AT HOME LATER, THIS IS AMPLY PROVED BY LANA'S PIN-UP COLLECTION!

OH, HE'S SO POWERFUL...SO HANDSOME...SO CLEVER... AND SO INDIFFERENT TO ME! M-MY ROMANCE WITH SUPERBOY JUST HASN'T GOT A CHANCE!

THERE'S CLARK KENT, MY NEXT DOOR NEIGHBOR, READING A BOOK IN HIS BACK YARD! I'LL PULL DOWN THE BLIND! HE...ER... MIGHT LAUGH IF HE GLANCED OVER AND SAW WHAT A CRUSH I HAVE ON SUPERBOY!

CLARK KENT WOULD HARDLY LAUGH, FOR HE IS SECRETLY SUPERBOY!

OUT OF MATCHES, DAD? WHY WORRY? MY X-RAY VISION WILL LIGHT YOUR CIGAR!

THANKS! WHAT A SUPER-CONVENIENT SON YOU ARE!

LATER, AS LANA TRIES TO GET HER MIND OFF SUPERBOY AT AN AFTERNOON MOVIE...

BUT, JANET! WHY ARE YOU DATING TOM WHEN YOU REALLY LOVE NED?

SIMPLE... TO MAKE NED JEALOUS AND PAY MORE ATTENTION TO ME!

HMMM...

WHEN LANA LEAVES..

THAT TRICK CAN WORK FOR EVERY GIRL IN THE WORLD... EXCEPT ME! HOW CAN I MAKE SUPERBOY JEALOUS WHEN NO OTHER BOY ON EARTH CAN COMPARE WITH HIM! IT'S IMPOSSIBLE!

BUT THIS SEEMS TO BE THE DAY THE IMPOSSIBLE CAN HAPPEN.. FOR AS CLARK WORKS AT PAP KENT'S GENERAL STORE...

I'LL DUMP THESE EMPTY CARTONS IN THE ALLEY... HEY! WHERE ARE THOSE HUGE HORSESHOES COMING FROM? THEY'RE... UH... MAKING RINGERS AROUND ME!

SWIFTLY, CLARK SHEDS HIS OUTER CLOTHING TO TAKE OVER AS SUPERBOY...

WHO COULD POSSIBLY HURL SUCH HEAVY THINGS FROM MILES AWAY? THEY SEEMED TO COME FROM OUT OF TOWN! I'LL FLY THERE AND SOLVE THE MYSTERY!

AS THE BOY OF STEEL FLIES AHEAD, HE SPOTS AN UNEXPECTED EMERGENCY...

GOSH, THE SMALLVILLE DAM IS OVERFLOWING! I'LL FIND OUT WHAT'S WRONG WITH THE OVERFLOW OUTLET THAT'S SUPPOSED TO PREVENT THIS!

UNDERWATER...

HMM... THE DRAINAGE GRILL IS CLOGGED! THIS'LL BREAK UP THAT "LOGJAM" OF DRIFTWOOD!

BY THE TIME SUPERBOY ZOOMS UP...

OMIGOSH! THE WATER SUDDENLY FROZE AROUND ME INTO A BLOCK OF SOLID ICE! I WONDER... WAS THIS TRICK DONE TO ME BY THE SAME UNKNOWN PERSON WHO FLUNG THOSE HORSESHOES?

AND EVEN AS SUPERBOY FLIES AGAINST A CLIFF TO FREE HIMSELF...

SUPERBOY ME AT CALVIN'S CAVE

HOLY COW! NOW HUGE LETTERS OF BAKED CLAY ARE SAILING HERE, SPELLING OUT A MESSAGE BEFORE THEY SMASH AGAINST THE CLIFF!

PRESENTLY, AT THAT SPOT...

PARDON MY STUNTS, SUPERBOY! TO "LURE" YOU HERE QUICKLY, I USED MY SUPER-STRENGTH FOR THE HORSESHOES, MY SUPER-COOLING BREATH TO FREEZE WATER, AND MY INFRA-RED VISION TO BAKE CLAY LETTERS!

BUT WH-WHO ARE YOU? HOW CAN YOU HAVE SUPER-POWERS LIKE ME?

I'M THOM KALLOR FROM THE PLANET XANTHU, WHICH EXISTS IN THE FUTURE! I ARRIVED IN MY TIME-SHIP! WE ALSO HAVE SPACESHIPS ON MY WORLD AND ONE DAY...

"...WHILE TAKING A SPIN IN THE FAMILY SPACEMOBILE, I PASSED A COMET, AND..."

THEY SAY IT DOES NO HARM TO GO THROUGH THE THIN GASES IN A COMET'S TAIL! BUT... UH... IT'S GLOWING STRANGELY! MY SKIN IS TINGLING!

DRIVING HOME, ENGINE FAILURE MADE ME CRASH, BUT AMAZINGLY...

MOM! DAD! I'M NOT HURT! I HAVEN'T GOT A SCRATCH ON ME!

GREAT STARS! HOW DID YOU BECOME INVULNERABLE, SON? AND YOU CAN FLY, TOO!

"AFTER MY FATHER PUT ME THROUGH MANY TESTS, WE REALIZED THE STARTLING TRUTH!"

"MY PARENTS DECIDED TO MAKE GOOD USE OF MY WONDERFUL POWERS!"

I EVEN HAVE INFRA-RED VISION WHOSE HEAT-WAVES CAN MELT METALS, DAD!

HMMM... THAT GLOWING COMET'S TAIL MUST HAVE CONTAINED PECULIAR RADIO-ACTIVE RAYS THAT FILLED YOU WITH SUPER-ENERGY FOR LIFE!

WEARING THAT SPECIAL COSTUME, YOU WILL BATTLE INJUSTICE AND CRIME AS...STAR BOY! ONLY YOUR MOTHER AND I WILL KNOW THAT YOUR SECRET IDENTITY IS THOM KALLOR!

"LATER, VISITING YOUR 30TH CENTURY EARTH AND LEARNING YOUR LANGUAGE, I WAS ONE DAY CALLED TO THE HEADQUARTERS OF...

WELCOME TO THE LEGION OF SUPER-HEROES! WE ARE ALL FROM VARIOUS WORLDS AND POSSESS SOME SUPER-POWERS LIKE YOU STAR BOY! WE'VE FORMED A CLUB TO HELP EACH OTHER SOLVE SUPER-PROBLEMS!

CHAMELEON BOY

LIGHTNING BOY

SATURN GIRL

COSMIC

AS STAR BOY'S THRILLING STORY ENDS...

THOSE SAME SUPER-KIDS VISITED SMALLVILLE ONCE AND MADE ME A MEMBER OF THEIR LEGION, TOO! BUT WHY HAVE YOU COME TO EARTH, STAR BOY?

TWO XANTHU CRIMINALS ESCAPED JAIL, SUPER-BOY! ONE FLED HERE IN A STOLEN TIME-SHIP! I PURSUED AND IMPRISONED HIM IN THIS CAVE!

STAR BOY CONTINUES, UNAWARE OF AN EAVESDROPPER...

THE OTHER CRIMINAL IS BACK ON XANTHU, HIDING IN AN UNDERGROUND MAZE OF COPPER DRAIN PIPES! I NEED YOUR HELP TO FIND HIM BECAUSE ON MY WORLD MY X-RAY VISION CAN'T PENETRATE COPPER!

HMM... JUST LIKE MINE CAN'T PENETRATE LEAD!

???

BY SHEER CHANCE, LANA LANG HAS COME THIS WAY TO PICK FLOWERS.'

GLAD TO HELP YOU, STAR BOY! I'LL TELL MY FOSTER-PARENTS I'M LEAVING!

WHEN YOU RETURN, REMEMBER NOT TO USE MY OTHER NAME IN FRONT OF THE CAPTURED CRIMINAL!

GOODNESS!

GOLLY! THAT "SUPERBOY" OF ANOTHER FUTURE WORLD HAS A SECRET IDENTITY! I DIDN'T COME SOON ENOUGH TO HEAR HIS OTHER NAME BUT... HMM!... I CAN BLUFF!

AND WHEN STAR BOY ENTERS THE CAVE FOR HIS PRISONER...

A GIRL! WH-WHO ARE YOU?

I'M LANA LANG, STAR BOY! I OVERHEARD YOUR ENTIRE STORY AND KNOW YOUR SECRET IDENTITY! I WON'T MENTION IT IN FRONT OF YOUR PRISONER... IF YOU DO ME A FAVOR!

YOU SEE, I HAVE A CRUSH ON SUPERBOY! YOU'RE THE ONLY BOY I'VE MET WHO IS EQUAL TO HIM! SO IF YOU PRETEND TO FALL IN LOVE WITH ME, YOU CAN MAKE SUPERBOY JEALOUS!

OTHERWISE, Y-YOU'LL GIVE AWAY MY SECRET IDENTITY, EH? I-I'M TRAPPED!

RETURNING MEANWHILE, SUPERBOY IS TIPPED OFF TO WHAT IS HAPPENING...

I'M READY TO GO WITH STAR BOY... WAIT! SOMEBODY WAS PICKING FLOWERS HERE.. AND I HEAR LANA'S VOICE NEAR THE CAVE!

NOW HERE ARE YOUR INSTRUCTIONS, STAR BOY! WHEN SUPERBOY SEES US TOGETHER, PRETEND WE MET BY CHANCE!

MAKE BELIEVE YOU FELL FOR ME AND INVITED ME TO VISIT YOUR WORLD! THEN, OH XANTHU, YOU'LL OBEY MY EVERY WHIM WITH YOUR SUPER-POWERS! YOUR DEVOTION TO ME WILL MAKE SUPERBOY JEALOUS! GOT IT?

HMM... SO THAT'S HER LITTLE SCHEME, IS IT?

NOW FIRST, FLY ME HOME AND CONVINCE MY PARENTS IT'S SAFE TO VISIT YOUR FUTURE WORLD! DO IT RIGHT... IF YOU WANT TO KEEP ME FROM REVEALING YOUR SECRET IDENTITY!

WITH THAT THREAT OVER HIM, STAR BOY HAS NO CHOICE! I'LL FOLLOW THEM!

PRESENTLY, AFTER LANA INTRODUCES STAR BOY TO HER STARTLED PARENTS...

GRACIOUS, LANA! A TRIP TO A STRANGE WORLD IN THE FUTURE MIGHT BE DANGEROUS!

NOT WITH STAR BOY AROUND, MOM! HE'LL PROVE HE'S AS MIGHTY AS SUPERBOY BY LIFTING YOUR CAR!

GREAT SCOTT! YOU HAVE SUPER-POWERS LIKE SUPERBOY! BUT I DON'T SUPPOSE YOU COULD MAKE MY CAR RUN! THE BATTERY IS DEAD!

THAT'S EASY, PROFESSOR LANG! I'LL RE-CHARGE IT WITH...

...MY ELECTRICAL VISION! A THOUSAND VOLTS WILL CHARGE THE BATTERY IN SECONDS!

WOW! STAR BOY HAS AN EXTRA SUPER-POWER EVEN I HAVEN'T GOT!

WHY, STAR BOY IS EVEN BETTER THAN SUPERBOY!

THEN IT'S PERFECTLY SAFE FOR YOU TO VISIT XANTHU, LANA! 'BYE!

I'LL RUSH BACK TO THE CAVE BEFORE THEM, AS IF I WAS WAITING ALL THE TIME! LANA WON'T KNOW I'M ONTO HER WHOLE SCHEME!

SOON, AT THE CAVE, AS STAR BOY IS FORCED TO PLAY LANA'S GAME...

JUST THINK, SUPERBOY! STAR BOY MET ME AND INSISTED I VISIT XANTHU WITH HIM! ISN'T THAT RIGHT, STAR BOY?

UH... YES! SHE'S SO... ER... CHARMING I COULDN'T RESIST!

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SUPERBOY PLAYS HIS OWN GAME .. BY ACTING INDIFFERENT..

WELL, I GUESS LANA WON'T BE IN THE WAY, STAR BOY! I'LL BRING OUT YOUR PRISONER!

SUPERBOY DOESN'T ACT THE LEAST BIT JEALOUS! BUT HE WILL WHEN STAR BOY KEEPS DANCING TO MY TUNE AS IF HE FELL FOR ME LIKE A TON OF BRICKS!

AFTER ALL FOUR ARE IN THE TIME-SHIP WITH STAR BOY AT THE CONTROLS...

HERE WE GO INTO THE FUTURE! WE'LL ARRIVE AT MY WORLD IN THE 30TH CENTURY!

DIZZY MOMENTS LATER, AFTER CROSSING THE TIME-AND-SPACE BARRIER...

HERE'S XANTHU! IT'S A WORLD OF SUPER-SCIENCE, FAR AHEAD OF 20TH CENTURY EARTH! I'LL LAND AT MY STAR BOY LABORATORY, WHICH THE PEOPLE DONATED TO ME!

AFTER LANDING...

LANA CAN WAIT HERE WHILE I TAKE THE PRISONER TO JAIL! SUPERBOY, YOU SEARCH FOR THE OTHER CRIMINAL HIDING IN A MAZE OF UNDERGROUND COPPER PIPES! THEY EXIST ALL OVER OUR PLANET TO DRAIN AWAY HEAVY FLOODS THAT OFTEN OCCUR!

I'M ON MY WAY, STAR BOY!

AFTER A SUPER-SPEED SEARCH...

AH, THERE HE IS IN A PIPE THAT CARRIES LITTLE WATER! I'LL SMASH DOWN THROUGH IT AND REPAIR IT BEFORE I LEAVE AGAIN!

GREETINGS! I'M SUPERBOY FROM EARTH! MY X-RAY VISION EASILY PENETRATED COPPER TO FIND YOUR HIDING PLACE!

BLAST THE LUCK! YOU'RE INVULNERABLE TO MY ATOMIC GUN, TOO!

AFTER TURNING THE WANTED ALIEN OVER TO THE XANTHU POLICE, SUPERBOY REJOINS HIS COMPANIONS TO FIND LANA CARRYING ON HER PLAN...

LOOK, SUPERBOY! STAR BOY IS USING HIS SUPER-LOOM TO WEAVE XANTHU-STYLE CLOTHING FOR ME OUT OF THAT GLOWING SPIDER-WEB THREAD!

SOON, LANA CHANGES IN A DRESSING ROOM AND RETURNS...

STAR BOY THINKS A LOT OF ME TO GO TO THIS TROUBLE! DOESN'T IT LOOK GLAMOROUS, SUPERBOY?

YES, LANA! IT'S STUNNING... MAGNIFICENT! I GUESS THAT'S WHY THEY CALL IT RAINBOW BRIDGE!

OH, DRAT! I MEANT MY DRESS, NOT THAT OLD BRIDGE!

SUPERBOY STILL ISN'T GIVING ME A TUMBLE, BUT I'LL MAKE HIM JEALOUS YET!

ARE YOU GOING TO SHOW ME THE OTHER SIGHTS AROUND TOWN, STAR BOY?

I'LL IMPRESS SUPERBOY BY SHOWING MY POWER OVER STAR BOY...

NEVER MIND WHAT SUPERBOY WANTS! I WANT SOME RARE JEWELS TO GO WITH THIS DRESS!

WHY... UH... ANYTHING YOUR HEART DESIRES, LANA! I'LL PILE UP THESE ROCKS AND MAKE YOU A SUPER-JEWEL!

WHY, THOSE "ROCKS" ARE BIG DIAMONDS IN THE ROUGH!

YES, THEY'RE COMMON ON XANTHU! NOBODY USES THEM FOR JEWELRY! BUT MY ELECTRICAL VISION WILL ALTER THEIR ATOMIC STRUCTURE AND CONDENSE THEM DOWN INTO...

...ONE SUPER-JEWEL EQUAL IN VALUE TO A THOUSAND EARTHLY DIAMONDS!

TOO BAD YOU HAVEN'T GOT ELECTRICAL VISION, SUPERBOY! ISN'T IT WONDERFUL HOW STAR BOY IS USING HIS SUPER-POWERS TO GRANT MY WISHES?

HAAAFF! SEEMS TO ME STAR BOY HAS MORE IMPORTANT THINGS TO DO WITH HIS SUPER-POWERS!

OH, HOW CAN YOU BE SO BLIND, SUPERBOY! CAN'T YOU SEE STAR BOY SIMPLY ADORES ME?

OH, I THINK HE'S JUST BEING POLITE TO YOU BECAUSE YOU'RE HIS GUEST. WHY SHOULD HE CARE FOR YOU WHEN ANY XANTHU GIRL WOULD GLADLY BE HIS STEADY!

THAT'S JUST THE POINT, YOU SUPER-IDIOT! I APPEAL TO HIM BECAUSE I'M FROM ANOTHER WORLD! I'M SOMETHING SPECIAL AND DIFFERENT!

NATURALLY AN EARTH GIRL HAS A GREATER ATTRACTION FOR STAR BOY THAN ORDINARY XANTHU GIRLS! SO HE ISN'T JUST BEING POLITE... HE'S REALLY MAD ABOUT ME!

LANA'S ACTING JUST AS I THOUGHT SHE WOULD! NOW TO CARRY OUT MY PLAN...

WELL, I'LL GO SIGHT-SEEING BY MYSELF SINCE STAR BOY CAN'T BEAR TO... ER... LEAVE YOU ALONE FOR A MOMENT!

I HAVEN'T MADE SUPERBOY JEALOUS YET, BUT I'LL KEEP MAKING HIM THINK STAR BOY IS CRAZY ABOUT ME! I'LL ASK STAR BOY TO LOCATE SUPERBOY FOR ME JUST AS SOON AS I PUT ON MY LIPSTICK!

TIME PASSES BEFORE THEY FIND SUPER-BOY, AND TO LANA'S SURPRISE...

OH, MY GOOD-NESS! SUPER-BOY IS WITH A XANTHU GIRL!

HI LANA! THIS IS ZYNTHIA! SHE OFFERED TO SHOW ME THE SIGHTS IN HER SKY CANOE! AND YOU WERE RIGHT BEFORE! JUST AS AN EARTH-GIRL LIKE YOU APPEALS TO STAR BOY...

...TO ME, IT SEEMS THAT THIS XANTHU GIRL HAS IT ALL OVER EARTH GIRLS! ...; SIGH!; ...

OH-OH! WHAT I FOOLISHLY SAID BEFORE IS... UH... BOOMERANGING BACK AT ME!

NEXT MOMENT...

SUPERBOY! BRING ME A RARE ANIMAL OF THE TIGER FAMILY CALLED THE PARAKAT! YOU'LL FIND ONE IN THE JUNGLE MOUNTAINS STRAIGHT SOUTH!

I'LL FLY THERE IMMEDIATELY, CYNTHIA, DEAR!

OH, HOW DISGUSTING! SUPERBOY IS OBEYING HER EVERY WHIM!

YOU MEAN LIKE THE WAY STAR BOY OBEYS YOUR EVERY WHIM, LANA?

YES...I MEAN, NO...UH...

OH, DEAR! THIS IS ALL WORKING OUT WRONG! NOW SUPERBOY IS GETTING ME JEALOUS!

WHEN SUPERBOY REACHES HIS DESTINATION...

I SEE WHY THEY'RE CALLED THE JUNGLE MOUNTAINS! EACH PEAK IS CROWNED WITH A JUNGLE INSTEAD OF BEING SNOW-CAPPED, LIKE ON EARTH! NOW TO LOCATE THE PARAKAT!

INSTEAD, THE FIERCE PARAKAT FINDS SUPERBOY!

WHAT AN ODD "TIGER"! HIS STRIPES RUN THE WRONG WAY AND HE HAS A BEAK LIKE A BIRD!

DIZZY... HAD ENOUGH... STOP!

HOLY COW! I DIDN'T EXPECT HIM TO ANSWER ME! I GUESS HE'S CALLED THE PARAKAT BECAUSE HE IMITATES SPEECH LIKE AN EARTHLY PARROT! HMM... THAT GIVES ME AN IDEA!

HMM... YOU NEED TAMING DOWN, KITTY! SWINGING YOU BY THE TAIL TILL YOU'RE DIZZY WILL DO IT! LET ME KNOW WHEN YOU'VE HAD ENOUGH AND I'LL STOP!

PRESENTLY WHEN SUPERBOY RETURNS TO STAR BOY'S PLACE, WHERE ZYNTHIA WAITS.

YOU... ARE... BEAU-TIFUL... ZYNTHIA!

OH, SUPERBOY! YOU TAUGHT HIM TO SAY THAT! HOW THRILLING TO HAVE A SUPER-BOYFRIEND LIKE YOU! PLEASE MAKE XANTHU YOUR HOME FROM NOW ON!

LET SUPERBOY GO... YOU HUSSY! HE CAN'T WASTE HIS PRECIOUS TIME ON YOU! HE HAS IMPORTANT JOBS TO DO ON EARTH!

BUT THEN, WHY ARE YOU KEEPING STAR BOY FROM DOING HIS IMPORTANT JOBS HERE, LANA?

SEEING HER SCHEME FALLING APART, LANA THINKS FAST, AND...

SUPERBOY...GASP! ...I FEEL FAINT! THE XANTHU AIR MUST BE BAD FOR ME! GET ME BACK TO EARTH QUICKLY!

AND TAKE YOU AWAY FROM YOUR DEVOTED STAR BOY? HE'D BE BROKEN-HEARTED, SO...

...THE HEAT OF MY INFRA-RED VISION WILL FUSE THE SILICON IN THIS SOIL INTO MOLTEN GLASS! THEN I'LL MOLD IT WITH MY HANDS INTO A HELMET!

I EQUIPPED IT WITH A FILTER TO PURIFY THE AIR YOU BREATHE IN, LANA! NOW, ZYNTHIA, WHAT WAS I GOING TO SAY ABOUT YOUR LOVELY EYES?

GLUB!...JEEPERS! I...I'M LICKED! IT'S ALL A BIG MESS NOW! I'LL HAVE TO GIVE UP MY SILLY SCHEME!

SUPERBOY,...UH...STAR BOY DOESN'T MEAN A THING TO ME...OR ME TO HIM! I ONLY THREATENED TO EXPOSE HIS SECRET IDENTITY TO MAKE YOU JEALOUS! BUT NOW I'M... ER... THE ONE THAT'S JEALOUS... OVER ZYNTHIA!

I MAY AS WELL CONFESS ALL! I EVEN TRICKED **STAR BOY**..I BLUFFED ABOUT KNOWING HIS OTHER IDENTITY! I... I GUESS YOU'LL BOTH DESPISE ME!

NO, LANA! I ADMIRE YOU FOR TELLING THE TRUTH! I'M SURE **STAR BOY** DOES TOO! AND AS FOR **ZYNTHIA**...

...I USED YOUR TRICK AND ASKED **ZYNTHIA** TO **PRETEND** WE WERE INTERESTED IN EACH OTHER!

I WAS GLAD TO HELP **SUPERBOY** CURE YOU OF YOUR "CRUSH" ON **STARBOY**! BECAUSE, YOU SEE, **STAR BOY** IS REALLY **MY** BOY-FRIEND!

WELL, ALL'S WELL THAT ENDS WELL! AND THANKS FOR HELPING ME CATCH THAT CRIMINAL, **SUPERBOY**!

I WON'T NEED YOUR TIME-SHIP, **STAR-BOY**! I'LL FUSE MORE SAND AND MOLD A SUPER-HARD GLASS BUBBLE!

SHORTLY...

LANA WILL BE PROTECTED AS I SPEED FASTER THAN LIGHT AND CROSS THE TIME-BARRIER INTO THE PAST!

HOPE WE MEET AGAIN SOMETIME, **SUPERBOY**! 'BYE!

LATER, BACK IN SMALLVILLE, AS **SUPERBOY** MELTS AN OPENING FOR LANA TO EMERGE...

I LEARNED MY LESSON, **SUPERBOY**! TRICKERY DOESN'T PAY! LET'S BE FRIENDS AGAIN! HOW ABOUT GOING TO THE **TEEN-TIME DANCE** WITH ME TONIGHT!

SORRY, LANA! BUT I'VE BEEN AWAY SO LONG...

...I HAVE LOTS OF **SUPER-JOBS** TO CATCH UP WITH! SEE YOU NEXT WEEK... MAYBE!

OH, DEAR! I'M BACK WHERE I STARTED! WELL, EVEN IF **SUPERBOY** IS STILL NO CLOSER TO ME, THANK GOODNESS HE'S **FARTHER FROM ZYNTHIA**! WHO KNOWS--IN TIME HE MIGHT HAVE FALLEN FOR HER!

13

AQUAMAN

FAR FROM THE KINGDOM OF ATLANTIS... CONTINUING THE SEARCH FOR MERA HIS CAPTURED QUEEN... AQUAMAN ARRIVES IN THE COUNTRY OF THE SAVAGE MAARZON...

"IS THIS MY FOE?..."

EASY, STORM ...I SAW HIM TOO! SOMEONE MOVING BEHIND THAT WALL OF SEA WEED...

THERE HE IS! AND JUDGING FROM THE DESCRIPTION I WAS GIVEN, HE'S A FULL-BLOODED MAARZON WARRIOR! BUT WHAT'S HE UP TO? WHY IS HE?..

HE'S ATTACKING!!

SWIFTLY, THE SEA KING TAKES DEFENSIVE ACTION...

WHY SHOULD HE ATTACK ME? WHAT'S THIS ALL ABOUT??

THEN..

I'LL SAY THAT FOR HIM...HE'S **PER-SISTENT!** LOOKS LIKE HE WANTS TO MAKE THIS A FIGHT TO THE FINISH!

AT LEAST IT'LL BE A PRETTY EVEN FIGHT... WITH THE SPEAR **OUT** OF HIS HAND!

OOF!

OKAY, FELLA! I MAY NOT KNOW WHAT THIS IS ABOUT, BUT THAT DOESN'T MEAN I'M **NOT GONNA FIGHT BACK!**

BOK

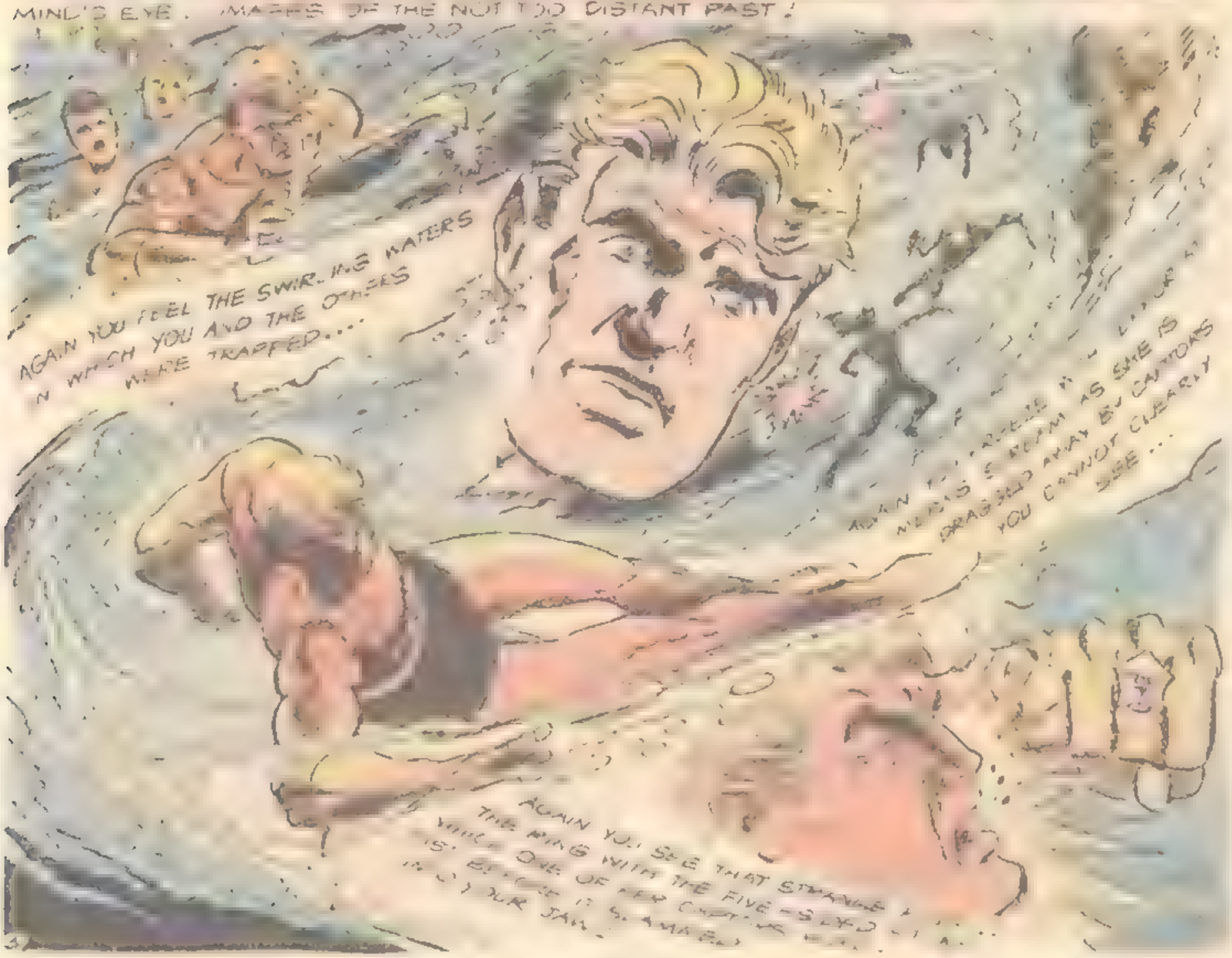
HE'S **BIG... AND STRONG...** BUT RATHER SLOW-WITTED! THIS MAY BE EASIER THAN I THOUGHT!

JUST THEN...

WHA-?

DIDN'T FIGURE ON **REINFORCEMENTS!**

SO ONCE AGAIN AQUAMAN, YOU ARE FACED WITH DEATH. THE MARIJON IS SMILING NOW. HE IS BACKING UP A BIT... SOON HE WILL TRY TO *RUN YOU THROUGH!* AS YOU TENSE, AWAITING HIS FATAL THRUST, STRANGE IMAGES FLASH BEFORE YOUR MIND'S EYE. IMAGES OF THE NOT TOO DISTANT PAST!


AGAIN YOU FEEL THE SWIRLING WATERS IN WHICH YOU AND THE OTHERS WERE TRAPPED...
AGAIN YOU SEE THAT STRANGE THE KING WITH THE FIVE-STYLED WHICH ONE OF HER CAPTIVE IS SHE TO BE?

IT WAS THE RING THAT BROUGHT YOU TO THIS SAVAGE LAND. HERE, FIVE-SIDED STONES ARE USED AS CHARMS TO WARD OFF EVIL. HERE MANY MEN WEAR RINGS SIMILAR TO THE ONE YOU SAW!

HERE HE COMES! GET READY... HEY! THIS GUY LOOSENED HIS GRIP!..

IN ONE SWIFT MOTION THE BLACK KING PULLS ONE ARM FREE, AND...

RRRGH

THEN, SPRINGING FORWARD...

GYNG!

ALL RIGHT, PELLA... YOUR TWO FRIENDS ARE DOWN FOR THE COUNT! NOW YOU AND ME ARE GONNA HAVE OURSELVES A LITTLE TALK! WHAT WAS THIS ALL ABOUT? WHO'S YOUR LEADER... YOUR KING?! HE'S THE ONE I WANNA TALK TO!

SPEAK UP! I SAID TALK!!

NO USE! HE CAN'T UNDERSTAND A WORD I'M SAYING!

THUS LETTING THE MAARZON WARRIOR LOOSE...

THAT'S IT MISTER... RUN! RUN FOR ALL YOU'RE WORTH!

STILL DON'T KNOW WHY THEY ATTACKED ME! I WONDER... COULD IT HAVE SOMETHING TO DO WITH MERA?!

IF THE MAARZONS ARE THE ONES WHO TOOK MERA CAPTIVE, THAT WOULD EX-PLAIN IT! THEY RECOGNIZED ME AND REALIZED THAT I'D COME HERE LOOKING FOR MERA, SO THEY ATTACKED ME!

AND IF THAT'S TRUE... THEN MERA COULD VERY WELL BE HERE... SOMEWHERE WITHIN THIS COLONY!

SHORTLY, THE SEA KING NEARS A CRUDE MAARZON DWELLING...

ENTERING A MORE POPULATED AREA! YOU STAY HERE, STORM... I'LL GO ON ALONE!

BUT NO SOONER DOES AQUAMAN ENTER THE MAARZON VILLAGE THAN...

WH--?

OH NO... NOT AGAIN! HOW MANY OF THESE JERKS AM I GONNA HAVE TO FIGHT?!

BUT AS HE WHIRLS ABOUT...

TWO GROUPS OF MAARZONS - *FIGHTING ONE ANOTHER!* THAT SPEAR WASN'T MEANT FOR ME! SOMEONE SIMPLY OVERSHOT HIS MARK! THEY HAVEN'T EVEN SPOTTED ME YET!

BUT I'D BETTER GET DOWN BEFORE THEY *DO* SPOT ME! I CAN'T GET INVOLVED IN THIS BATTLE... MORE IMPORTANT THINGS TO DO!

...LIKE FINDING THE MAARZON KING! IF MERA *IS* HERE, THEN *HE* CAN TELL ME EXACTLY WHERE TO FIND HER! AND HE'D *BETTER* TALK... OR *I'LL PULL THIS COLONY DOWN AROUND HIS EARS!*

FIGHTING! LOOKS LIKE THE ONLY THING THEY DO HERE IS *FIGHT!* THEIR WHOLE EXISTENCE SEEMS TO BE BASED ON *VIOLENCE!*

BUT THE SEA KING SEES NO REGAL BUILDINGS, NO SIGN OF AUTHORITY, NO SIGN OF ORDER. HE SEES ONLY...

THAT EXPLAINS WHY I WAS ATTACKED! IT WAS THE NATURAL THING FOR THESE PEOPLE TO DO! THEY PROBABLY ATTACK *ANY* STRANGER WHO COMES NEAR THIS COLONY!

THERE ARE SOME MAAN'ZON DWELLINGS UP ON THAT PLATEAU! PERHAPS SOMEONE OF AUTHORITY CAN BE FOUND THERE!

BUT AS THE SEA KING SWIMS TOWARD THE PLATEAU...

THAT SHIP! IT...IT LOOKS LIKE THE MANTA SHIP! BUT...

IT IS HIM! BLACK MANTA!

BUT... WHAT'S HE DOING HERE? HOW DOES HE FIT INTO ALL THIS??

THEN, A HATCH OPENS, AND A FAMILIAR FIGURE, A SWORN ENEMY, LEAVES THE SHIP AND SWIMS DOWN TOWARD THE PLATEAU...

AND AS AQUAMAN'S MORTAL ENEMY REACHES THE GROUP OF WAITING WARRIORS...

THEY'RE BOWING DOWN TO HIM! THEY'RE ACTING AS THOUGH HE'S A GOD!

WHAT'S THIS ALL ABOUT? WHAT'S HE UP TO?! UNLESS...

UNLESS... HE'S THE ONE WHO TOOK MERA HOSTAGE!

FIRST, I HAVE TO MAKE SURE HE'S THE ONE! AND IF HE IS... I'LL DESTROY HIM!!

YES... IT ALL ADDS UP! HE MUST BE THE ONE! HE HAS THE PERFECT MOTIVE... REVENGE! AND THIS COULD EXPLAIN THAT RING! SOME OF THESE MAARZONS WERE WITH HIM WHEN HE MADE THE CAPTURE!

THUS..

AAAIIA!!

WHERE IS SHE? WHAT HAVE YOU DONE TO HER? TALK... OR I'LL...

WHA-? AQUAMAN! HOW DID..?

HA! YOU WERE A FOOL TO COME HERE, AQUAMAN! HERE, I REIGN SUPREME!

GET HIM, MY CHOSEN ONES! THE GLORIOUS MYSTIC WANDS THIS MAN DESTROYED... NOW!!

AT THE BLACK MANTA'S COMMAND, THE SAVAGE WARRIORS LEAP FORWARD EAGER TO KILL BUT AQUAMAN, HIS ANGER MOUNTING, RUTHLESSLY BRUSHES THEM ASIDE...

THIS IS IT, MANTA! I AM CALLING FORTH ALL THE MANY CREATURES OF THE SEA! THEY WILL COME IN DROVES! THEY WILL ATTACK AND DESTROY THIS ENTIRE COLONY... UNLESS YOU CALL OFF YOUR MEN... NOW!!

HE...HE'S NOT BLUFFING! WHAT'S COME OVER HIM? HE'S CHANGED... BECOME MERCILESS! HE MEANS TO KILL US ALL!

STOP, AQUAMAN! YOU'VE WON... FOR NOW!

BACK MY CHOSEN ONES! WE SHALL HANDLE THIS ANOTHER WAY!

AND AS THE MAARIONS OBEY INSTANTLY...

I WARN YOU, AQUAMAN, THIS IS NO MORE THAN A STALEMATE! DO NOT PRESS YOUR ADVANTAGE... OR I SHALL HAVE THEM ATTACK AGAIN...NO MATTER WHAT THE CONSEQUENCES!

SHUT-UP! I'VE NO TIME FOR YOUR THREATS! I WANT MERA! TELL ME WHERE SHE IS AND I SHALL LEAVE YOU IN PEACE!

WHAT HAVE YOU DONE WITH HER? TELL ME!

SO... THAT'S IT! SOMEONE'S CAPTURED MERA! H'AM... THIS COULD BE THE OPPORTUNITY I'VE WAITED FOR!

QUIT STALLING! WHAT DO YOU WANT FOR HER SAFE RETURN?..

A DUEL, AQUAMAN... THE END OF US SHALL FIGHT A PERSONAL DUEL! AND YOU SHALL LEARN OF MERA ONLY IF YOU DEFEAT ME! WE SHALL FIGHT WITH SPEARS AS IS THE CUSTOM WITH THESE PEOPLE!

PREPARE THE ARENA!

HE HAS THE ADVANTAGE! HE KNOWS THAT I DON'T DARE KILL HIM...FOR FEAR I WOULD NEVER LEARN OF MERA'S FATE. BUT HE HAS NO QUALMS ABOUT KILLING ME!

BUT THERE MUST BE MORE TO IT THAN THAT! HE'S UP TO SOMETHING ELSE, I'M SURE OF IT! BUT I HAVE TO GO THROUGH WITH THIS!

I CANNOT LOSE... AND YOU ALL KNOW WHY! BUT, IN CASE SOMETHING GOES WRONG, I MUST HAVE MEANS OF ESCAPE! YOU KNOW WHAT TO DO!

UNH-UN...

AS THE TWO BRUTAL ENEMIES DECIDE THEIR FUEL TO THE DEATH, A MAARIJN WARRIOR SWIMS UNNOTICED UP TOWARD ATLANTA'S SHIP.

HORT!

OOP! THAT MUST BE THE SIGNAL TO BEGIN! MANTA CAUGHT ME OFF-GUARD! IF I CAN JUST...

NO! CAN'T GAIN THE INITIATIVE! HE'S TOO FAST KEEPING ME ON THE DEFENSE!

COME, GREAT SEA KING! FIGHT BACK! THIS IS TOO EASY FOR ME!

THE BATTLE'S.. HMM. NOT OVER YET, MANTA!

WHEW! NEARLY LOST MY SPEAR! HE SURE KNOWS WHAT HE'S DOING...

NOW'S MY CHANCE!

YIELD, MANTA.. OR DIE!

IT'S AS THOUGH HE'S TRAINED FOR YEARS... WAITING FOR THIS DAY TO COME! BUT, IF... IF I CAN STAY IN ONE PIECE.. HE'S BOUND TO GIVE ME AN OPENING!

FOOL! YOU...AGAIN... CAN'T BLUFF ME!

AS THE BLACK MANTA FALLS BACK HE PLACES ONE HAND BEHIND HIS MASK...

YOU DON'T DARE KILL ME...

THEN AS MANTA AGAIN CHARGES TOWARDS HIS FOE...

I'M TOO IMPORTANT TO YOU!

SO... THIS IS HOW YOU PLAN TO DEFEAT ME... THROUGH TREACHERY!

THE WAY I FIGHT DOES NOT MATTER! ALL THAT'S IMPORTANT IS... YOUR DEATH!!

WHA-? HIS EYES! STRANGE BEAMS OF LIGHT COMING FROM HIS EYES!.. GETTING DIZZY... MUSTN'T LOOK AT THEM!

IT WON'T WORK, MANTA! NO MATTER WHAT TRICKS YOU USE, I WILL NOT BE BEATEN!!

I CAN WARD OFF HIS THRUSTS BY WATCHING HIS SPEAR INSTEAD OF HIM...

BUT... HOW LONG CAN I KEEP IT UP? HOW CAN I DEFEAT SOMEONE I CAN'T LOOK AT?!

BUT NOW, LET US LEAVE THE BATTLE SCENE... BACK THROUGH THE DEPTHS TO THE KINGDOM OF ATLANTIS. WHERE, NOW, A RATHER INTERESTING EVENT UNFOLDS...

AND YOU MUST ALL DO AS I INSTRUCT! THOSE WHO DO NOT OBEY WILL BE BANISHED FROM THE GREAT DOMED KINGDOM..

HE MUST BE STOPPED... BEFORE THE PEOPLE OF ATLANTIS REBEL AND COUNTLESS LIVES ARE LOST! IF I COULD CONTACT AQUAMAN, THEN...

WAIT! AQUALAD! PERHAPS, HE'LL KNOW WHAT CAN BE DONE!

AQUAMAN SHOULD NEVER HAVE LEFT NARKRAN IN CHARGE! WITH EACH PASSING DAY, HE BECOMES MORE AND MORE OF A TYRANT! IF ONLY THERE WERE SOMETHING I COULD DO...

HE'S STILL IN THE HOSPITAL... RECOVERING FROM THAT WOUND HE RECEIVED WHILE SEARCHING FOR MERA! HE MAY NOT BE ABLE TO HELP ME, BUT PERHAPS HE CAN TELL ME WHAT I CAN DO!

BUT WHEN SHE REACHES THE HOSPITAL..

BUT I DON'T UNDERSTAND! WHY CAN'T I SEE HIM! HAS HIS WOUND BECOME WORSE?

NO, BUT HE... I'M SORRY! I'M NOT ALLOWED TO TELL YOU ANYMORE! BUT THE DOCTOR DEMANDS THAT HE NOT BE DISTURBED!

AND SO, SEVERAL DAYS LATER, IT IS A PUZZLED AQUALAD WHO HEADS BACK THROUGH THE STREETS OF ATLANTIS...

NOW WHAT? IF ONLY AQUAMAN HADN'T BEEN SO COMPLETELY WRAPPED UP IN HIS SEARCH FOR MERA! THEN HE MIGHT HAVE NOTICED HIMSELF WHAT WAS HAPPENING TO NARKRAN!

AT THAT MOMENT, IN A HOSPITAL CORRIDOR, AQUALAD IS A TOPIC OF DISCUSSION...

HAVE YOU FINISHED YOUR DIAGNOSIS YET? WHAT'S *HAPPENED* TO THE BOY??

I... I *STILL* DON'T KNOW! I CAN'T MAKE ANY SENSE OUT OF IT! I'VE NEVER KNOWN A SIMPLE BLOW TO THE HEAD TO CAUSE *THIS* TYPE OF REACTION!

THE BOY MUST BE KEPT UNDER HEAVY SEDATION! HE IS STILL VIOLENT, STILL TRYING TO ESCAPE! AND WE CAN'T LET THAT HAPPEN! NOT WHILE HE'S IN A STATE LIKE THIS!

BUT WE'VE SPENT ENOUGH TIME AWAY FROM OUR HERO! NOW, LET US RETURN TO THE LAND OF THE MAARIONS, WHERE A BATTLE STILL RAGES... AND A SEA KING SLOWLY WEAKENS...

GOTTA... LOOK AT... MANTA OCCASIONALLY!.. BECOMING DIZZIER...

I *MUST* HOLD ON!.. I *MUST* DEFEAT HIM!.. FOR MERA'S SAKE, I *MUST*!!

BUT...

AQUALAD...

VICTORY IS MINE!
AQUAMAN, THIS IS THE MOMENT
OF YOUR EXECUTION!

HE'S TAKING HIS TIME! HE'S SURE THAT IT'S ALL OVER... THAT HE HAS NOTHING TO WORRY ABOUT...

BUT I'VE STILL GOT A CHANCE...BY DOING WHAT HE *LEAST EXPECTS* ME TO DO...

SUDDENLY, THE BEAKED SPINNER HEADLONGS AT HER FOE, AND

KKA-?

I'M STILL GROGGY, BUT NOT SO GROGGY THAT I'D STAND STILL WAITING FOR *YOU* TO *KILL ME*, MANTA.

SPLOK

I CAN ONLY USE ONE ARM, MANTA... BUT THAT'S ALL I NEED!

GNNG!

THE BATTLE'S FINISHED, MANTA! NOW, YOU HAVE AN AGREEMENT TO LIVE UP TO!

NO! YOU CANNOT DEFEAT ME... NOT THIS EASILY!

YOU HAVE A WEAPON NOW, BUT YOU DON'T DARE USE IT! AND YOU ARE WOUNDED... WEAKENED! I STILL HAVE THE ADVANTAGE!

I DON'T NEED A WEAPON... TO DEFEAT THE LIKES OF YOU!!

ARGHHH!

AT THAT MOMENT ABOARD THE MANTA-SHIP

MASTER IS BEING HURT... MUST DO AS I WAS TOLD!

WHERE'S MERA? START TALKING -- BEFORE I KILL YOU!

WHA-?

TRANSPARENT!

NOW YOU CANNOT HARM ME, SEA KING... CANNOT FORCE ME TO TALK!

GONE!! BUT WHERE-?

AH, YOUR "VICTORY" IS SHORT-LIVED, AQUAMAN! THAT STUPID MAARZON--HE SHOULD HAVE DONE THIS SOONER!

NO! YOU CAN'T ESCAPE! YOU MUSTN'T!!

WAIT! HIS SHIP! HE'D NEVER LEAVE WITHOUT THAT!

HE'S GOT TO BE IN THERE! AND I MUST FORCE HIM OUT... FORCE HIM TO TAKE ME TO MERA! GOT TO GET TO IT BEFORE...

BUT, BEFORE AQUAMAN CAN REACH THE CRAFT...

NO! THE SHIP! IT... IT'S STARTING TO VANISH!

YOU ARE A FOOL, AKKARAN! I KNOW NOTHING OF MERA'S WHEREABOUTS! I WAS SIMPLY USING THIS AS A MEANS TO YOUR DESTRUCTION! YOU ARE WEAK! LOSING BLOOD, AND NOW BELIEVE I SHALL INSTRUCT MY WARRIORS TO ATTACK YOU AND DESTROY YOU!

NO! HE'S LYING! HE KNOWS ABOUT MERA! I MUSTN'T LET HIM LEAVE!

YOU CAN'T GO! YOU GAVE ME YOUR WORD! THESE PEOPLE MAY WORSHIP YOU NOW BUT THEY WON'T RESPECT

FOOL! I AM THEIR GOD! EVIL! THEY EXPECT ME TO LIE. TO ACT WITHOUT HONOR. THEY WILL DO WHATEVER I WISH THEM TO DO.

BUT LET ME SAY ONE FINAL THING-- ALTHOUGH I DID NOT CAPTURE MERA I BELIEVE I KNOW WHO DID! BUT YOU SHALL NEVER LEARN WHO IT WAS!

AND NOW-- ATTACK, CHOSEN ONES!. DESTROY THIS MAN!

IT'S NO USE. HE'S GONE. AND HIS MEN - I CAN HEAR THEM APPROACHING.

NO! YOU CAN'T...

WHILE THIS IS GOING ABOUT, AQUAMAN MEETS THE ATTACK..

HE'S RIGHT! THEY *WILL* DO WHATEVER HE SAYS! THEY HAVE *NO INTELLIGENCE OF THEIR OWN!*

I COULD CALL FORTH THE SEA CREATURES... BUT *NO!* THESE PEOPLE ARE ONLY DOING AS THEY WERE TOLD... BY A BEING THEY THINK TO BE A GOD!

I HAVE TO DEFEAT THEM MYSELF! HAVE AN IDEA, BUT.. GOTTA FORCE THEM BACK BEFORE I CAN USE IT!

BUT WAS BLACK MANTA TELLING THE TRUTH? DID *HE* TAKE MERA?

AND IF HE DIDN'T, WHO *DID*?. AND HOW DOES THE RING FIT IN? WAS *SOMEONE ELSE* USING THE MAARZONS AS UNDERLINGS?

GOTTA STOP THINKING ABOUT MERA AND CONCENTRATE ON WHAT'S HAPPENING *NOW!*

GOTTA PUSH THIS GUY BACK TO HAVE ENOUGH ROOM TO MAKE MY NEXT MOVE..

LUNGH!

THERE!

A SMALL OPENING! AQUAMAN BEGINS TO SPIN... FASTER AND FASTER, AS ONLY THE SEA KING CAN, CREATING A GIANT WHIRLPOOL WHICH BRUSHES THE SAVAGE WARRIORS ASIDE...

THE WHIRLPOOL GROWS LARGER AND LARGER! THEN AQUAMAN STOPS SPINNING AND SWIMS UP AND OUT BEFORE THE WATERS CEASE TO SWIRL...

I'M FREE! NOW TO SWIM UP TO A HIGHER LEVEL... WHERE THE MAARIONS WON'T DARE FOLLOW...

THE PAIN!.. MY ARM WOUND IS GETTING WORSE AND WORSE! I'LL HAVE TO HAVE IT SEEN TO IMMEDIATELY! THEN, I'LL CONTINUE MY SEARCH! I MUST FIND MERA... I MUST!!

THEN, A WAVE OF FRUSTRATION AND ANGUISH FLOODS OVER THE KING OF THE SEA...

BUT *WHERE*?! SHE COULD BE *ANYWHERE*! *WHERE* DO I *GO*?! *WHERE* SHALL I SEARCH *NEXT*?!

IF ONLY I COULD HAVE BEATEN THE *TRUTH* OUT OF BLACK MANTA...

AQUAMAN'S SEARCH FOR MERA CONTINUES IN THE NEXT ISSUE OF ADVENTURE COMICS... ON SALE THE FIRST WEEK IN SEPTEMBER!

NIGHT HAS SETTLED UNCOMFORTABLY ABOUT THE SHINGLED SHOULDERS OF THE PROUD OLD EDISON THEATER-- BUT THOSE AT WORK WITHIN ARE TOO INVOLVED TO NOTICE ITS COMING...

FOR THE MILLIONTH TIME, JEFFREY SLOANE --NO! YOU'RE NOT GOING TO FORCE ME TO USE REAL MAGIC IN MY ACT!

SEVRACS EMOCEB REPIV!

FORGET IT, JEFF--I AM NOT GOING TO ARGUE WITH YOU ANY MORE!

HERE, CATCH!

BUT YOU'VE GOT TO! THAT SLEIGHT-OF-HAND JUNK IS SO OLD IT ATTRACTS MOTHS!

SORRY, JEFF--I JUST COULDN'T RESIST!

ZATANNA, THAT'S A COBRA! IT'S.

OH, WOW! YOU'VE GOT A SENSE OF HUMOR THAT WOULD DO A MORTICIAN PROUD!

HOPE YOU DON'T HAVE HAY FEVER!

HAY FEVER, NO-- BUT ULCERS, YES!

C'MON--GRAB YOUR THINGS! YOUR MISTREATED MANAGER IS TREATING FOR DINNER!

MIGHT AS WELL! THERE'S NOBODY ELSE HERE BUT US AND THE MICE ANYWAY!

THE MAGICIAN

BUT AS THE *PRINCESS OF PRESTIDIGITATION* AND HER EASY-GOING COMPANION TURN TO LEAVE...

KRASH!

HUH? THERE'S SOMEBODY *MOVING* BACKSTAGE!

OH, IT'S PROBABLY THE WATCHMAN'S *CAT*--

EXCEPT FOR *ONE* THING.

THE WATCHMAN DOESN'T *HAVE* A CAT!

THERE'S SOMETHING *FUNNY* GOING ON HERE--AND IT'S *NOT* PART OF THE ACT!

I'M GONNA TAKE A LOOK *BACKSTAGE*, BABY--YOU WAIT *HERE!*

NOT ON YOUR *LIFE*, JEFFREY! WHEREVER *YOU* GO IS WHERE *I'M* GOING!

[illegible] AROUND THE [illegible] AS THEY MOVE CAUTIOUSLY [illegible]

NOTHING HERE! MAYBE IT WAS JUST A CAT, AFTER ALL!

I'M NOT SO *SURE*, JEFF! THE VIBRATIONS IN THIS AREA ALL *WRONG*--!

THEY'RE *TWISTED*, OPPRESSIVE--AS IF SOME GREAT MALIGNANT FORCE HAD PASSED THIS WAY!

JEFF--I'M SUDDENLY VERY *FRIGHTENED!*

JEFF? JEFF?

JEFF ARE YOU THERE? WHAT'S *HAPPENED* TO YOU?

JEFF--WHERE ARE YOU? ANSWER ME--PLEASE--*WHERE ARE YOU??*

THE *SAUCY SORCERESS* STARES AT HER AWESOME FOE AND HER MIND IS FILLED WITH MEMORIES--OF THE *TOWER OF THE DEAD*... AND ITS INTER-DIMENSIONAL PORTAL--

HE BE *GONE*, PRETTY PUNY ONE-- BUT *GORGONUS* BE HERE IN HIS PLACE!

GORGONUS!?

BUT THAT'S *IMPOSSIBLE*--

YOU'RE *DEAD!*

--THE SELFSAME PORTAL THE GORGONUS HURTLED HEAD-LONG INTO DURING THEIR LAST ENCOUNTER * --DOOMING HIMSELF TO DRIFT FOREVER THROUGH *LIMBO*...

ADVENTURE COMICS #417

BUT THE MEMORIES SWIFTLY FADE AS...

YOU! YOU ARE THE REASON GORGONUS FELL INTO THE SKY--THE REASON GORGONUS CANNOT FIND THE *TOWER* THAT IS HIS HOME--!

GORGONUS WILL *MAKE* YOU SEND HIM BACK-- OR GORGONUS WILL *CRUSH* YOU INTO DUST!

SO *THAT'S* IT! SOMEHOW GORGONUS WAS CAUGHT IN OUR BACKWASH WHEN JEFF AND I ESCAPED FROM THE TOWER AND WAS CARRIED BACK TO EARTH WITH US--BUT HE MATERIALIZED SOMEWHERE ELSE!

SKRASHH!!

ALL HE WANTS NOW IS A WAY HOME-- BUT I *CAN'T* GIVE IT TO HIM!

WHERE BE GORGONUS'S TOWER, SMALL ONE?

WHY CAN GORGONUS NOT GO HOME?

GORGONUS, LISTEN TO ME!

I CAN'T HELP YOU!

THERE IS NO WAY BACK TO YOUR WORLD!

YOU LIE, PUNY CREATURE! GORGONUS WILL BREAK YOU IN HALF FOR THAT!

HAD A FEELING HE WOULDN'T TAKE KINDLY TO THAT INFORMATION! I'D BETTER DO SOMETHING TO STOP HIM--AND FAST!

ROMRA TCETORP EM!

RECITING HER COMMANDS BACKWARDS, ZATANNA BRINGS UNTOLD MYSTIC FORCES INTO PLAY--FORCES THAT BREATHE LIFE INTO A SUIT OF INANIMATE ARMOR...

THERE, PUNY ONE--YOUR METAL WARRIOR WILL ANNOY GORGONUS NO LONGER!

SO MUCH FOR THAT DIVERSION! I'VE GOT TO STAY OUT OF THE MONSTER'S GRASP--UNTIL I CAN FIND JEFF! MAYBE THE TWO OF US'LL HAVE A CHANCE!

CIGAM TEPRAC RAEPPA!

THE ARMOR'S PUTTING UP A GOOD FIGHT--BUT GORGONUS IS ALMOST INDESTRUCTIBLE.

ALL I'M DOING IS SLOWING HIM DOWN!

BUT AS THE MISTRESS OF THE OCCULT SOAKS INTO THE DUSTY AIR...

HUH?

NO, COWARDLY ONE--YOU WILL NOT ESCAPE!

THIS TIME GORGONUS WILL HAVE HIS REVENGE!

LOOK, DOOMED ONE--GAZE INTO THE EYES OF GORGONUS! GAZE INTO EYES THAT WILL TURN YOU TO STONE!

THERE IS A HIDDEN BLUR OF MOTION FROM THE SORCERESS'S SLEEVE AND...

PUNY FOOL. YOU CANNOT BLIND GORGONUS WITH SHREDS OF COLORED CLOTH!

THERE, SIMPLE ONE--THE CLOTH BE GONE AND NOTHING HAS CHANGED!

YOU WILL STILL MEET YOUR END BENEATH GORGONUS'S DEADLY STARE!

THEN STOP TALKING, GRUESOME--AND GET IT OVER WITH!

I'M NOT GOING TO WAIT HERE ALL NIGHT!

YOU'VE GOT A FAT CHANCE, UGLY--GRANITE LEGS WOULD SIMPLY RUIN MY NYLONS!

BUT YOU'VE JUST GIVEN ME A GREAT IDEA!

MAYBE NOT--BUT I CAN SURE TRY!

I DON'T EVER WANT TO HEAR JEFF COMPLAINING ABOUT MY SLEIGHT-OF-HAND AGAIN!

THE THING CALLED GORGONUS NARROWS HIS DEADLY EYES AND GLARES AT HIS TEMPORARY OPPONENT, WHO COYLY ADJUSTS A PAIR OF COMPACT AND...

ANNATAZ, SB TNERAPSNART!

NO! THE PUNY ONE BE VANISHED--AND A REFLECTING GLASS STANDS BEHIND HER!

GORGONUS STARES AT HIMSELF! NOOOOOOO!

THE SCREAMING HAS LONG FADED BY THE TIME ZATANNA HAS LOCATED HER COMPANION..

MAN, I FEEL LIKE SOMEBODY DROPPED TWO TONS OF ROTTEN REVIEWS ON MY HEAD!

WORSE YET--I DIDN'T EVEN MANAGE A LOOK AT THE GUY WHO SLUGGED ME!

I WOULDN'T WORRY ABOUT HIM, JEFFREY!

HOW MUCH TROUBLE CAN A STATUE CAUSE?

5

SUPERGIRL

A LEGION OF SUPER-HEROES SPECIAL!

HI, SUPERGIRL!

WE'RE YOUR THREE SUPER-GIRL FRIENDS!

GULP!... WHO ARE THEY??! I-I'VE ALWAYS WANTED TO HAVE SOME GIRL-FRIENDS WHO HAVE SUPER-POWERS, SUCH AS I DO, B-BUT WHAT WILL SUPERMAN THINK WHEN HE LEARNS MY EXISTENCE AS SUPERGIRL IS NO LONGER A SECRET!

SUPPOSE YOU WERE THE MOST TERRIFIC, MOST SUPER-POWERFUL GIRL ON EARTH--SUPERGIRL--BUT YOU DIDN'T HAVE A GIRL-FRIEND YOUR OWN AGE WITH WHOM YOU COULD SHARE CONFIDENCES! DESPITE ALL YOUR MIGHTY POWERS, YOU'D BE RATHER LONELY, WOULDN'T YOU? THAT'S JUST THE UNHAPPY POSITION THE GIRL OF STEEL IS IN UNTIL THAT AMAZING, WONDERFUL, GLORIOUS DAY WHEN SHE MEETS...

SUPERGIRL'S THREE SUPER GIRL-FRIENDS!

STORY: JERRY SIEGEL
ART. JIM MOONEY

LATE ONE AFTERNOON, AT MIDVALE ORPHANAGE, AS LINDA LEE, WHO IS SECRETLY **SUPERGIRL**, WATCHES TV WITH SOME OTHER ORPHANS...

GREETINGS, CATS! THIS IS YOUR PAL FRANKIE, ONCE AGAIN BRINGING YOU THE **FRANKIE HUDSON SHOW**...

:CHUCKLE!:... FRANKIE IS JANICE'S FAVORITE TV STAR!

:SIGH!:

I GOT FRANKIE'S ANSWER TO MY FAN-LETTER TODAY... WRITTEN IN HIS OWN PERSONAL HAND-WRITING! I'LL TREASURE IT FOR-EVER, ELAINE! I- I'LL EVEN GUARD IT WITH MY LIFE!

JANICE! GUESS WHAT MY BOY-FRIEND CLARENCE TOLD ME TODAY, THE **CREEP**...!

GAILY THE TWO GIRL-FRIENDS EXCITEDLY CHATTER UNAWARE OF LINDA NEARBY...

HOW LUCKY THEY ARE! A GIRL **NEEDS** ANOTHER GIRL TO TALK THINGS OVER WITH! :CHOKE!: I **KNOW**...BECAUSE **AS SUPER-GIRL I CAN'T TELL** MY HOPES AND WORRIES TO ANOTHER GIRL...!

UNHAPPILY, LINDA GOES FOR A WALK...

I PROMISED **SUPERMAN** I'D KEEP MY EXISTENCE ON EARTH A SECRET SO I CAN **BE** HIS EMER-GENCY WEAPON! I'D **NEVER** BREAK THAT PROMISE TO HIM, BUT...

...I--I CAN'T HELP **WISHING** THERE **WAS** ANOTHER GIRL I COULD CONFIDE IN! MAYBE .. A GIRL WITH SUPER-POWERS LIKE MYSELF, WHO.. BUT WHY EVEN THINK ABOUT IT, WHEN IT CAN NEVER BE? :CHOKE!:

YOU ARE WRONG, SUPERGIRL!

YOU DO HAVE A GIRL-FRIEND... ME! **MEET ME AT THE FIELD NEAR CRANSTON CREEK!**

A TELEPATHIC VOICE! I CAN MENTALLY HEAR IT! I **KNOW** IT'S NOT JUST MY 'IMAGINATION!!

STEPPING BEHIND SOME SCREENING BUSHES, LINDA LEE REMOVES HER WIG, SWIFTLY CHANGING TO HER SECRET IDENTITY OF DYNAMIC SUPERGIRL!

I WONDER...! CAN THAT VOICE BELONG TO LORI, THE MERMAID FROM ATLANTIS? SHE HAS TELE-PATHIC POWERS! ...I'LL SOON KNOW!

EN ROUTE TO CRANSTON CREEK, AS THE GIRL OF STEEL PASSES A HOLLOW TREE IN A WOODS

TAKE OVER FOR ME AT THE ORPHANAGE, LINDA ROBOT, WHILE I'M GONE! COVER MY ABSENCE!

I SHALL, MISTRESS!

AN INSTANT LATER, AT HER DESTINATION...

I DON'T SEE ANYONE! WAS THAT TELEPATHIC VOICE ONLY IN MY IMAGINATION, AFTER ALL?

DEFINITELY NOT!... LOOK BEHIND YOU!

AND AS SUPERGIRL OBEYS..

A GIRL IN A MASK! MY X-RAY VISION CAN'T PENE-TRATE THE MASK! IT MUST BE MADE OF LEAD!

I AM YOUR SUPER GIRL-FRIEND! WE HAVE MET BEFORE! CAN YOU GUESS MY IDENTITY, BEFORE I REMOVE THE SCREENING LEAD-MASK?

WHO ARE YOU?

I HAVEN'T THE SLIGHTEST IDEA WHO YOU ARE! PLEASE TELL ME!

FIRST, TURN AND LOOK BEHIND YOU, AGAIN!

SWIFTLY, THE GIRL OF STEEL WHIRLS ABOUT...

GASP! WHO ARE YOU?!!

I AM YOUR SECOND SUPER GIRL-FRIEND! AND NOW, LOOK BEHIND YOU ONCE MORE FOR ANOTHER ASTOUNDING SURPRISE!

TURNING, SUPERGIRL SEES...

:GASP!: ...ANOTHER ROCKET-PROPELLED GIRL!

YOU'RE SMILING AT ME... AS THOUGH YOU KNOW ALL ABOUT ME!

OF COURSE I DO...!

... ALL THREE OF ME, SUPERGIRL! :HA, HA: ...OR SHOULD I CALL YOU... LINDA LEE??

ULP! SH-SHE SPLIT INTO THREE EXACT DUPLICATES!

AND AS THE ASTOUNDING GIRL'S TWO DUPLICATED BODIES BLEND BACK INTO ONE FORM AGAIN...

THIS IS AWFUL! SUPERMAN AND I HAVE GONE TO A LOT OF TROUBLE TO KEEP MY EXISTENCE ON EARTH A SECRET, BUT YOU GIRLS...! WAIT! I'VE GOT IT!!

NO WONDER YOU ARE ABLE TO TELEPATHICALLY CONTACT ME! YOU'RE SATURN GIRL... A MEMBER OF THE LEGION OF SUPER-HEROES FROM THE 30TH CENTURY... AND YOU ARE HIGHLY SKILLED AT SUPER-THOUGHT-CASTING!

RIGHT!

THEN YOU TWO GIRLS MUST ALSO BE MEMBERS OF THE LEGION!

CORRECT! EACH CLUB MEMBER HAS A SUPER-POWER BECAUSE OUR PARENTS CAME FROM OTHER WORLDS!...I AM PHANTOM GIRL!

AND I AM... TRIPLICATE GIRL!

MEMBERS OF THE LEGION OF SUPER-HEROES MONITOR BOTH THE PAST AND THE FUTURE ON THEIR TIME-SCANNER MACHINE!...SUPERMAN JOINED THAT CLUB YEARS AGO, WHEN HE WAS A SUPER-BOY! I'M SURE HE WON'T MIND MY HAVING THESE GIRLS FOR GIRL-FRIENDS!

GIRL-FRIENDS!!... GOSH, JUST A LITTLE WHILE AGO I WAS TERRIBLY UNHAPPY BECAUSE I DIDN'T HAVE SUPER GIRL-FRIENDS! BUT NOW THAT'S ALL CHANGED! OH I'M SO HAPPY!!

IT WAS FUN MYSTIFYING YOU, SUPERGIRL! -- BUT NOW IT'S TIME TO TELL YOU THE REAL REASON WHY WE'RE HERE!... WE WANT YOU TO TRY TO JOIN OUR CLUB AGAIN! WE'RE SURE YOU'LL SUCCEED THIS TIME!

INSTANTLY, SUPERGIRL'S THOUGHTS WING BACK.

EACH YEAR, THE LEGION ADMITS ONE NEW MEMBER--THE APPLICANT WHO PERFORMS THE MOST SPECTACULAR SUPER-FEAT! LAST YEAR, AFTER TRAVELING INTO THE FUTURE, I ALMOST BECAME THEIR NEWEST MEMBER BY BUILDING A SUPER-TUNNEL THROUGH THE EARTH... BUT.

".. I FAILED TO GET IN BECAUSE REC KRYPTONITE, WHICH ALWAYS AFFECTS ME UNPREDICTABLY, TRANSFORMED ME INTO AN ADULT.. A SUPERWOMAN!"

SORRY, YOU'RE TOO OLD NOW! YOU ARE OVER OUR CLUB'S 18-YEAR-OLD AGE LIMIT!

IF YOU BECOME A TEEN-AGER AGAIN, YOU'LL BE ELIGIBLE TO TRY ONCE MORE, NEXT YEAR!

FORTUNATELY, I RETURNED TO MY NORMAL AGE SOON AFTER I CAME BACK TO MY OWN TIME-ERA!"

SWELL! SHALL I FLY TO THE FUTURE THROUGH THE TIME-BARRIER UNDER MY OWN POWER?

SHORTLY, IN A NEARBY SECLUDED AREA ..

PLEASE COME WITH US TO THE 30TH CENTURY IN OUR TIME-MACHINE, SUPERGIRL!

I'D LOVE IT!

HOW WONDERFUL TO HAVE SUPER-GIRL FRIENDS!

AS SHOWN LAST ISSUE, IN ADVENTURE #342-GREE.

THROUGH THE TIME-BARRIER FLASHES THE AMAZING, TIME-SPANNING VEHICLE, WHIZZING PAST DOZENS, THEN HUNDREDS OF YEARS TOWARD THE DISTANT FUTURE...

2058 2059 2060

FINALLY...

WE'RE OVER THE CITY OF **METROPOLIS**...1000 YEARS IN THE FUTURE! IT'S...UTTERLY **FABULOUS!**

SOON AS **SUPERGIRL** AND HER THREE SUPER GIRL-FRIENDS LEAVE THE TIME-MACHINE AND STREAK THROUGH THE SKY..

IT'S THE LEGION'S CLUB-HOUSE! AND I SEE SOME FAMILIAR FIGURES!

SUPER HEROES CLUB

MOMENTS LATER...

COSMIC BOY AND **LIGHTNING LAD**! IT'S GOOD TO SEE YOU AGAIN!

COME INSIDE, **SUPERGIRL**! I'LL INTRODUCE YOU TO SOME OF THE APPLICANTS FOR MEMBERSHIP YOU'LL SOON BE COMPETING AGAINST! EACH HAS A STARTLING SUPER-POWER.

PRESENTLY INSIDE THE CLUB-HOUSE..

SOME MIGHTY TOUGH COMPETION, **SUPERGIRL**!--WE'VE CHANGED THE RULES SO THAT ONE BOY AND ONE GIRL CAN BECOME NEW MEMBERS EACH YEAR! ..AH, HERE COMES AN APPLICANT WHO'S **SURE** TO SURPRISE YOU!

YOU'LL BE UP AGAINST

SHRINKING VIOLET SUPER-SHRINKING

BOUNCING BOY SUPER-BOUNCING

GUN BOY SUPER-RADIANCE

AS A HANDSOME, GREEN-SKINNED YOUTH APPROACHES THE CLUB TABLE...

HM-MM. I'VE NEVER MET HIM, OR MY PHOTOGRAPHIC MIND WOULD RECALL IT! BUT THERE'S SOMETHING ALMOST **HAUNTINGLY** FAMILIAR ABOUT HIS **FACE!**

SEATING HIMSELF, THE YOUTH PUTS HIS 'DENTIFYING PLACARD ON THE TABLE...

OH, NO! IT ISN'T POSSIBLE!

NOW I KNOW WHO HE RESEMBLES!

I AM **BRAINIAC 5**, **SUPERGIRL**... THE GREAT-GREAT-GREAT-GREAT-GRANDSON OF THE SPACE VILLAIN WHO WAS **SUPERMAN'S** FOULEST FCE!

BRAINIAC 5

"IT WAS **MY ANCESTOR** WHO STOLE CITIES FROM VARIOUS WORLDS AND SHRANK THEM INSIDE BOTTLES! AMONG HIS PREY WAS THE KRYP-TONIAN CITY OF **KANDOR** WHICH **SUPERMAN** LATER RESCUED AND PLACED IN HIS FORTRESS ON EARTH, FOR SAFE-KEEPING..."

A FINE PRIZE, EH, KOKO? HA, HA!

I KNOW YOU WERE **SUPER-MAN'S** GREAT EMERGENCY WEAPON, CENTURIES AGO, **SUPERGIRL**! I UNDERSTAND YOUR LOATHING FOR THE FIEND WHO WAS MY ANCESTOR! BUT PLEASE... PLEASE... DON'T HATE **ME**...!

IS HE ONLY **PRETENDING** REMORSE?

I, TOO, DESPISE HIS CRIMES! FOR MANY CENTURIES MY ANCESTORS HAVE SOUGHT TO ATONE FOR HIS EVIL DEEDS! WE ARE **GLAD** HE DIED WHILE BATTLING **SUPERMAN!**

WHAT?!... TELL ME ABOUT IT!

"THE END OF MY VILLAINOUS GREAT-GREAT-GREAT-GREAT-GRANDFATHER BEGAN WHEN **BRAINIAC** PREPARED TO SNEAK-ATTACK EARTH..."

HA, HA, HA! LIVE AND LEARN EH, KOKO?

"INSIDE THE FLYING SAUCER..."

I WAS A FOOL MERELY TO STEAL CITIES. FROM NOW ON, I STEAL WORLDS! THE HYPER-FORCES IN MY RAY WILL REDUCE EARTH TO MINIATURE SIZE AND TRANSPORT IT INSIDE THIS BOTTLE! ... EH?.. WHAT'S THAT ON THE TELESCOPIC-SCREEN?!!

IT'S SUPERMAN! HE'S SIGHTED ME IN SPACE! LOOK--HE SPLIT OPEN A METEOR, KOKO, AND HE'S BURNED A WARNING MESSAGE ON IT WITH HIS X-RAY VISION! · HA, HA! MY ULTRA FORCE-SHIELD COMPLETELY PROTECTS OUR SHIP AGAINST HIS MIGHTY POWERS!

IF YOU ATTACK EARTH YOU'LL BE DESTROYED!

"DISREGARDING THE WARNING, BRAINIAC TRIED TO SHRINK EARTH. BUT SUPERMAN TURNED THE FLYING-SAUCER SO ITS RAY MISSED EARTH... THEN HE SUPER-SWIFTLY FLUNG THE SAUCER INTO THE PATH OF ITS OWN RAY...!"

THE SHIP IS RAPIDLY DWINDLING DOWN.. DOWN... DOWN...

THEN IT POPPED OUT OF EXISTENCE... REDUCED IN SIZE TO NOTHINGNESS!

BUT HOW WAS THAT POSSIBLE, WHEN BRAINIAC'S SHIP WAS PROTECTED BY ITS ULTRA FORCE-SHIELD!

IS BRAINIAC 5 LYING TO ME, FOR SOME REASON!

"SUPERMAN'S X-RAY VISION HAD OBSERVED... BRAINIAC'S PET IS ACCIDENTALLY LEANING AGAINST A SWITCH WHICH HAS TURNED OFF THE SPACE-SHIP'S ULTRA FORCE-SHIELD! IF I HURL THE SHIP INTO THE REDUCING RAY SWIFTLY ENOUGH, THE SHIP WILL VANISH BEFORE BRAINIAC CAN LET GO OF THE REDUCING-RAY CONTROL-DEVICE!

AS BRAINIAC 5 COMPLETES HIS STORY, THE GANG GATHERS FOR MIDNIGHT SNACK AND SUPER-PETS OUTSIDE THE CLUB-HOUSE.

NOW YOU KNOW WHY I'M CALLED BOUNCING BOY!

PEOPLE SAY I'M QUITE BRIGHT! THAT'S WHY I'M CALLED SUN BOY!

AND WHEN THE GIRL OF STEEL'S TURN ARRIVES...

I'LL BE BACK IN A FLASH, FOLKS!

SHE'S TUNNELING INTO THE GROUND! WHATEVER SHE'S PLANNING, I KNOW IT'LL BE **TERRIFIC!**

UNDERNEATH THE EARTH'S SURFACE BURROWS **SUPERGIRL**, STREAKING HERE AND THERE ABOUT THE GLOBE, AT INCRED'BLE SPEED, GUIDED BY HER AMAZING SUPER-VISION...

JUST WHAT I'M AFTER! NOW TO CONTINUE THE TREASURE HUNT!

A MINUTE LATER...

HERE YOU ARE! CURIOS OF THE GREAT HEROES OF THE PAST! I'VE DUG UP KING ARTHUR'S SWORD, EXCALIBUR... ACHILLES' HELMET... KING RICHARD THE LION-HEARTED'S SHIELD!

QUICK! LET ME PUT THIS ON YOU **SUPERGIRL!**

NO SOONER DOES THE [illegible] ABOUT THE GIRL OF STEEL'S WAIST, THEN...

A GREEN KRYPTONITE METEOR IS FLASHING DOWNWARD! STRANGE! I FEEL NO ILL EFFECTS, THOUGH **KRYPTONITE** IS THE ONE SUBSTANCE THAT CAN DESTROY ME!

INSTANTLY, SHE ACTS...

I GET IT! THE BELT'S FORCE-SHIELD IS **PROTECTING ME!** I'M **IMMUNE TO KRYPTONITE RADIATIONS!** THERE! I'VE DESTROYED THE METEOR BEFORE IT COULD CRUSH **BRAINIAC 5!**

THEN...

BRAINIAC 5, YOU SAVED MY LIFE BY LOANING ME YOUR **FORCE-SHIELD BELT**... BUT YOU COULD HAVE LOST YOUR **OWN** LIFE! **WHY** DID YOU IT!

I'M NO VILLAIN, ALTHOUGH MY ANCESTOR WAS! I'D GLADLY SACRIFICE MY LIFE TO SAVE YOURS, ANY TIME!

AS THE METEOR'S FRAGMENTS ARE TAKEN AWAY...

HE'S SWEET!

I'LL RETURN THE FORCE-SHIELD TO YOU NOW THAT THE METEOR IS GONE!

NO. KEEP IT ALWAYS! I QUICKLY ADJUSTED THE CONTROLS TO YOUR VIBRATIONAL RATE. IT'LL ONLY WORK FOR YOU!

SHORTLY, AT A COLORFUL CEREMONY, PLAQUES ARE PRESENTED TO THE NEW MEMBERS...

YOU WERE CHOSEN, **SUPERGIRL**, BECAUSE OF THE TROPHIES YOUR UNIQUE SUPER-TREASURE HUNT BROUGHT BACK!

AND YOU WERE SELECTED, **BRAINIAC 5**, FOR YOUR NOBLE COURAGE IN HELPING **SUPERGIRL**, THOUGH IT COULD HAVE COST YOU YOUR OWN LIFE!

SPECTATORS CHEER WILDLY, AS.

THIS IS A THRILLING EXPERIENCE I'LL NEVER, NEVER FORGET! I'M SIMPLY...OVERWHELMED!

I SHALL ALWAYS UPHOLD THE LEGION'S HIGH TRADITIONS!

YEA, SUPERGIRL!

BRAVO, BRAINIAC 5!

HOORAY FOR THE LEGION OF SUPER-HEROES!

AFTERWARD, AS THE GIRL OF STEEL PREPARES TO LEAVE THE 30th CENTURY...

PLEASE REMAIN.. AND BE MY GIRL....!

I'M SORRY, **BRAINIAC 5**! I MUST RETURN TO MY OWN TIME-ERA TO BE **SUPERMAN'S** EMERGENCY WEAPON! SOMEDAY WE'LL MEET AGAIN!

BACK THROUGH THE TIME-BARRIER SPEEDS **SUPERGIRL** IN THE TIME TRAVELING GLOBE...

BRAINIAC 5 IS AS NICE AS HIS ANCESTOR WAS MENACING! HOW ASTONISHING THAT THE GREAT-GREAT-GREAT GRANDSON OF **SUPERMAN'S** WORST ENEMY SHOULD LIKE ME!

1961

1962

1963

AS THE GLOBE REACHES OUR PRESENT-DAY WORLD...

GOODBYE, SUPER-GIRL... 'TIL WE MEET AGAIN!

FAREWELL! I'LL NEVER FORGET MY THREE SUPER GIRL-FRIENDS FROM THE DISTANT FUTURE!

THEN, AS IT VANISHES ONCE MORE...

I WAS ABLE TO BRING THE FORCE-SHIELD BACK WITH ME BECAUSE I TRAVELED THROUGH THE TIME-BARRIER IN THE **TIME-GLOBE**, INSTEAD OF UNDER MY OWN POWER!- GOSH, SINCE THE BELT MAKES ME INVULNERABLE TO **KRYPTONITE**, I-I'M NOW **MIGHTIER THAN SUPERMAN!**

HMMM! I WONDER IF THE FORCE-SHIELD IS STILL GOOD? I'LL MENTALLY ASK FOR **LORI** THE MER-MAID'S HELP, TO TEST IT! THOUGH I HAVEN'T TELEPATHIC POWERS, SHE CAN PICK UP MY MENTAL THOUGHTS AND APPEAR IF I CONCENTRATE HARD ENOUGH!

PRESENTLY, IN AN ART GALLERY IN THE SUNKEN CONTINENT OF ATLANTIS

SUPERGIRL CALLING **LORI**! PLEASE HELP ME FIND A **GREEN KRYPTO-NITE METEOR SUPERMAN** ONCE HURLED INTO THE OCEAN IN A LEAD CHEST, TO DISPOSE OF IT!

LORI ANSWERING TELEPATHICALLY!... COME!

I HEAR YOU, TOO, **SUPERGIRL**! THIS IS YOUR ADMIRER. **JERRO**!

AND AS **LORI** MENTALLY DIRECTS **SUPER-GIRL** TO THE UNDERSEA CHEST...

H-HERE GOES! MAYBE MY FORCE-SHIELD WON'T W-WORK!

SHE'S OPENING THE LEAD CHEST, **JERRO**! THE BOX'S LEAD WALLS PROTECTED HER FROM THE **KRYPTONITE'S** RADIATIONS! BUT NOW...!

TAKE CARE, **SUPERGIRL**!

A MOMENT LATER...

SEE, **LORI** AND **JERRO**? THE FORCE-SHIELD IS PROTECTING ME FROM HARM!... I'LL PERMANENTLY GET RID OF THE METEOR!

MUST YOU LEAVE SO QUICKLY, **SUPERGIRL**? ...I'VE MISSED YOU! PLEASE RETURN AGAIN **SOON**! I THINK OF YOU... OFTEN!

OUT OF THE OCEAN, THEN UP INTO OUTER SPACE, FLASHES THE GIRL OF STEEL, SOON ENCOUNTERING SUPERMAN'S SUPERDOG PET, KRYPTO, WHO IS FLYING TOWARD EARTH...

IT'S SUPERGIRL!

OH, DEAR! SINCE THIS METEOR ISN'T HURTING ME, KRYPTO MUST THINK IT'S IMITATION KRYPTONITE!

AN INSTANT AFTERWARD...

YEOWLP! I'M GETTING OUTA HERE! THAT'S REAL KRYPTONITE!-- I DON'T UNDERSTAND WHY IT BOTHERS ME AND NOT HER! AND I'M NOT HANGING AROUND TO FIND OUT WHY, EITHER!--EARTH HERE I COME!

POOR KRYPTO!

ON STREAKS SUPERGIRL TO A WORLD MILLIONS OF LIGHT YEARS DISTANT FROM OURS...

THE POSSIBILITY OF SUPERMAN WANDERING TO THIS AREA IS INFINITELY REMOTE! I'LL BURY THE KRYPTONITE METEOR DEEP INSIDE THIS LEAD ASTEROID, WHERE IT CAN NEVER MENACE HIM!

BACK TO EARTH SHE SPEEDS, BUT AS SHE FLIES OVER A MINE THAT IS BEING BLASTED...

ULP! THAT ROCK FRAGMENT PIERCED MY FORCE-SHIELD AND SHATTERED AGAINST MY INVULNERABLE BODY!... PASSAGE THROUGH THE TIME-BARRIER RADICALLY SHORTENED THE "LIFE" OF THE FORCE-SHIELD!-- IT'S NOW... USELESS!

DISCARDING THE NOW WORTHLESS FORCE-SHIELD BELT, SUPERGIRL RESUMES HER IDENTITY OF LINDA LEE...

HAVEN'T YOU GOT A BOY-FRIEND, LINDA?

I GUESS NOT...

TOO BAD! EVERY GIRL SHOULD HAVE ONE, EVEN IF SHE HAS TO SETTLE FOR A DRIP LIKE...UGH...CLARENCE!

I COULDN'T TELL THEM I HAVE TWO BOYFRIENDS! ONE A MERMAN YOUTH AT THE BOTTOM OF THE OCEAN...THE OTHER THE GREAT-GREAT-GREAT-GREAT-GRANDSON OF THE GREATEST SPACE-VILLAIN OF ALL TIME! THEY'D HAVE THOUGHT I WAS EITHER CRAZY, OR LYING!

CAPT. MARVEL

TWISTED POWERS

WHAM!!

HOLY MOLEY! THERE'S SOMETHING WRONG HERE-- I'M SUPPOSED TO DO THE FIGHTING, NOT BILLY!

BILLY BATSON ARRIVES AT BEAUTIFUL PINE VALLEY FOR A QUIET VACATION FROM HIS DUTIES AS STAFF ON WHIZ

I HOPE I'LL HAVE A QUIET WEEK! NOBODY KNOWS ME HERE.

BUT BILLY IS W STAFF!

YOU'RE BILLY BATSON, THE BOY NEWSCASTER AREN'T YOU? OH PLEASE, MAY I HAVE YOUR AUTOGRAPH?

ULPS!

IS THAT GREAT BIG HANDSOME CAPT. MARVEL COMING LATER? I'D BE SO THRILLED TO MEET HIM TOO!

I--ER--DON'T EXPECT HIM TO COME AT ALL!

BREAK NO AWAY FROM THE [illegible] BILLY GOES TO HIS ROOM!

NOTHING CAN HAPPEN IN THIS QUIET, PEACEFUL VALLEY, THAT WOULD RE-QUIRE THE PRESENCE OF CAPT. MARVEL, I'M SURE!

AGAIN BILLY IS MISTAKEN

HOLY MOLEY! [illegible] DOUBLE DOMESTICS!

HELP! ROBBERS!

SHAZAM!

THE MAGIC WORD ECHOES HIGH INTO THE REALM OF THE SIX SHAZAM GODS, AND ZEUS GOD OF LIGHTNING PREPARES TO THROW THE MAGIC BOLT!

SHAZAM!

THAT BILLY BATSON HARDLY GIVES ME A MOMENT'S REST · GOOD THING I HAVE A LARGE STOCK OF THE LIGHTNING-BOLTS ON HAND!

WAIT, ZEUS!

WAIT FOR WHAT? I CAN'T WAIT A SECOND! WHEN BILLY TELLS THE WORD HE NEEDS THE POWERS OF CAPTAIN MARVEL RIGHT AWAY!

THE MAGIC LIGHTNING LANDS ON EARTH WITH A LOUD CLAP OF THUNDER!

AND LITTLE BILLY BATSON IS CHANGED INTO BIG **CAPT. MARVEL**, THE WORLD'S MIGHTIEST MORTAL!

ROBBERS, EH?

HAND OVER DA DOUGH!

YESS S-S-S-R!

OOOO! LOOK! IT'S CAPT. MARVEL--THAT GREAT BIG POWERFUL HERO!

AMEN!

YIPE! C-CAPTAIN MARVEL! ITS NO USE SHOOTIN' AT HIM--- DA BULLETS WOULD ONLY BOUNCE!

STAND BACK EVERYBODY! WHEN CAPT MARVEL HITS SOMEBODY, THEY USUALLY FLY 40 OR 50 FEET! HE HAS SIMPLY **AWFUL** STRENGTH!

THE WORLD'S WIGHTEST MORTAL GOES INTO ACTION WITH HIS FAMED FIGHTING FISTS!

WHOS FIRST? HOW ABOUT YOU, PAL?

BUT THERE IS A MOST SURPRISING RESULT!

WHAT--? YOU DON'T FALL?

JEEPERS! I HARDLY FELT IT: CAN DIS CAPT. MARVEL GUY BE **OVER-RATED**?

I'LL SEE WHAT I CAN DO TO **HIM**!

UGGGGGG

HA, HA! I KNOCKED HIM DIZZY WID ONE BLOW! I ALWAYS THOUGHT DIS MARVEL GUY WAS DA BUNK! HE'S A WEAKLING, DAT'S WHAT! NOW WE CAN SCRAM WID DA LOOT! HA, HA!

?

3

HAS THE UNIVERSE GONE CRAZY? HAS THE WORLD'S MIGHTIEST MORTAL BEEN LAID LOW BY ONE FALTERY BLOW?

CAPT. MARVEL! MY HERO! IT MUST HAVE BEEN A MISTAKE!

DON'T LET THEM GET AWAY! GET AFTER THEM!

I WILL! HERE GOES!

OOF! HOLY MOLEY! I CAN'T FLY EITHER!

SO THAT'S THE GREAT CAPT. MARVEL! HMMMMFFFF! I SHOULD HAVE KNOWN ALL THOSE STORIES ABOUT HIM WERE LIES. HE'S NOT A BIG HERO, HE'S JUST A BIG BLUFF!

CAPT. MARVEL HIMSELF IS MOST BAFFLED OF ALL!

WHAT'S WRONG? I CAN'T HIT! I CAN'T FLY! HOLY MOLEY! ----WHAT HAS HAPPENED TO MY POWERS?

I'LL MAKE ANOTHER TEST. I'LL HIT THIS TREE AS HARD AS I CAN. IT SHOULD BREAK IN HALF!

OWW! ALL I DID WAS HURT MY HAND! I DIDN'T EVEN KNOCK ANY BARK OFF!

THIS IS MADDENING! MY POWERS ARE GONE! THE ROBBERS GOT AWAY SCOT FREE! GUESS I MIGHT AS WELL CHANGE BACK TO BILLY--

SHAZAM!

DON'T BOTHER ME! DON'T YOU HEAR THE WORD SHAZAM?

BUT ZEUS! LISTEN--!

SHAZAM!

I'M AS DISGUSTED AS CAPT. MARVEL!

WHAT HAPPENED TO CAPT. MARVEL'S POWERS? THAT'S THE QUESTION!

WHIZZ!

BILLY BATSON! I JUST MET YOUR GREAT CAPT MARVEL--AND WHAT A FLOP HE IS! HE JUST MADE UP ALL THOSE STORIES OF HOW POWERFUL AND WISE HE IS! ADD TO YOU! AND TO-ADD TO CAPT. MARVEL!

AS NIGHTTIME COMES A SAD AND DOWN-CAST BILLY GOES TO BED:

EVERYBODY IN THE HOTEL HERE NOW THINKS CAPT. MARVEL IS A BIG BUST! THE HORRIBLE THING IS--WHAT IF THE POWERS NEVER COME BACK?

MEANWHILE, AT THE HIDE-OUT IN THE HOODS LIFE IS AT THE LOW EBB OF WOE AND HE AND HIS GANG ARE THINKING OVER THE RECENT EPISODE

LISTEN, MEN, WE JUST FOUND OUT TODAY THAT CAPT MARVEL IS A WEAKLING!

SO WHAT GOOD?

SO HERE'S OUR CHANCE TO KILL HIM, ALL WE GOT TO DO IS FIND HIM NOW HERE'S MY PLAN...

AND SOON... HSST! BILLY'S SOUND ASLEEP! I'LL GRAB HIM! I NOTICED THAT WHENEVER HE'S MOLESTED, CAPT. MARVEL USUALLY SHOWS UP!

WHEN BILLY WAKES FROM CONFUSED SLEEP...

WE GOT YA, BRAT! NOW WE'LL SEE IF CAPT. MARVEL SHOWS UP! TOSS HIM OUT DA WINDOW!

HA, HA! SO LONG, KID!

IS THIS THE END OF BILLY BATSON AND CAPT. MARVEL?

OHHHHH!

THUD

BUT BILLY DOESN'T VANISH!

HOLY MOLEY! IT DIDN'T BREAK MY NECK, AS IT SHOULD HAVE! AND THE GAG DROPPED AWAY, SO-- SHAZAM!

BOOM!

PICK ON BILLY, WILL THEY? I'LL--!

IT WORKED, BOSS! HE'S HERE ALREADY!

UGH! I FORGOT! MY POWERS ARE GONE!

ONCE MORE CAPT MARVEL FINDS HIMSELF WEAK!

TAKE HIM TO DA CABIN. WE'LL FINISH HIM OFF DERE!

SEE? HE FEELS PAIN! DAT MEANS BULLETS DON'T BOUNCE OFF HIM! DAT WAS JUST A MADE-UP STORY!

NOW I'LL BLOW H.S HEAD OFF! HA, HA!

HOLY MOLEY! I'M SUNK! WAIT!-- WHY WAS IT THAT BILLY WAS NOT HURT, WHEN HE FELL FROM THE WINDOW? I MAY BE CRAZY, BUT---

SHAZAM!

FOR THE FIRST TIME, IT IS CAPT. MARVEL WHO CHANGES TO BILLY BATSON. IN THE FACE OF DEATH!

BOOM!

HEY! HE'S GONE! AND DA BULLETS ARE BOUNCING OFF OF BILLY BATSON!

AHA! JUST AS CAPT. MARVEL FIGURED! SOMEHOW HIS POWERS SEEM TO HAVE BEEN TRANSFERRED TO ME!

BANG! BANG! BANG!

....AND WHEN BILLY BATSON USES HIS FISTS...

WOW! DID I DO THAT?

7

OH EH DA BOY, ON!
YOU'VE ONLY WET YOUR HAND MISTER!
YIII! HOW CAN A LITTLE BOY HAVE A GRIP LIKE DAT?
I'LL RUN!
THE ANSWER IS VERY SIMPLE! I HAVE THE POWERS OF CAPT MARVEL NOW FOR YOU...
DOGGONE! THERE HE GOES AND OF COURSE HE CAN RUN FASTER THAN I CAN!
WAIT! IF I HAVE CAPT. MARVEL'S POWERS-- MAYBE I CAN FLY TOO! I'LL TRY IT!
THE MOST AMAZING THING OF ALL HAPPENS AS BILLY BATSON ZOOMS THROUGH THE AIR WITH ALL THE GRACE AND SPEED THAT CAPTAIN MARVEL FORMERLY HAD!
HEY, THIS IS GREAT!
WHOOSH
ERKK!

BUT WHAT **CAUSED** THESE TWISTED POWERS ? WHY DID CAPTAIN MARVEL LOSE THE POWERS AND WHY DID THEY COME TO **ME** ! WELL, I'LL LET CAPT. MARVEL TAKE THE CREDIT FOR THIS -- SHAZAM !

I'VE BEEN TRYING TO TELL YOU ALL ALONG THAT THE LIGHTNING-BOLTS YOU SENT DOWN BEFORE WERE **DEFECTIVE** ! THEY CHANGED BILLY TO CAPT. MARVEL ALL RIGHT.. *BUT THEY DIDN'T GIVE MARVEL HIS* ***POWERS*** !

I MADE A MISTAKE AND PUT THE POWERS IN THE BOLTS THAT CHANGED HIM BACK TO BILLY! -ERE, USE THIS NEW BOLT I JUST MADE!

LITTLE DOES BILLY KNOW THAT UP ABOVE ZEUS AT LAST FINDS OUT HE HAS MADE A GRAVE MISTAKE BEFORE !

I HOPE I . DIDN'T CAUSE CAPT. MARVEL ANY--ER-- DIFFICULTIES ! WELL, THIS NEW BOLT WILL STRAIGHTEN EVERY-THING OUT !

SHAZAM !

WHEW ! *I CAN FLY AGAIN ! MY POWERS ARE BACK ! FOR A WHILE I THOUGHT MY CAREER AS THE* ***WORLD'S MIGHTIEST MORTAL*** *WAS OVER !*

WELL, FOLKS, I ENJOYED THE REST OF MY VACATION AFTER THAT ! I MUST CONFESS I GOT A KICK OUT OF HAVING THE GREAT POWERS FOR A WHILE ! BUT I DON'T THINK CAPT. MARVEL ENJOYED IT AT ALL !

END 9

AND NOW A WORD FROM OUR LIBRARY

Would you believe ADVENTURE #491 has only been on sale a week, and we're already getting mail trumpeting the return of comicdom's oldest title? In particular, Wallace Lee Hopkins of Glen Carbon, Il., wondered why we don't print originally published dates on the stories anymore. Esthetic reasons more than anything else —we hate marring up the art anymore than necessary. Of course, when we have the occasional free page (like this one) we can do a listing of the stories

AQUAMAN:

"Sorcerers of the Sea" from AQUAMAN #40, July-Aug., 1968 ..... ((491))
"Trail of the Ring" from AQUAMAN #41, Sept.-Oct., 1968 ..... ((492))
"Is This My Foe?" from AQUAMAN #42, Nov. Dec., 1968 ..... ((493))

BLACK CANARY:

Part 1 from ADVENTURE #418, April, 1972 ..... ((491))
Part 2 from ADVENTURE #419, May, 1972 ..... ((492))

LEGION.

Superboy in "The Legion of Super-Heroes" from ADVENTURE #247,
April, 1958 ..... ((491))
Superboy in "Prisoner of the Super-Heroes" from ADVENTURE #267,
December, 1959 ..... ((491))
Supergirl in "The Three Super-Heroes" from ACTION #267,
August, 1960 ..... ((492))
Superboy in "The Army of Living Kryptonite Men" from SUPERBOY #86,
January, 1961 ..... ((492))
Superboy in "Lana Lang and the Legion of Super-Heroes" from
ADVENTURE #282, March, 1961 ..... ((493))
Supergirl in "Supergirl's Three Super Girl Friends" from
ACTION #276, May, 1961 ..... ((493))

SANDMAN:

"The Man Who Couldn't Sleep" from ADVENTURE #80, Nov. 1942 ..... ((491))
"Unholy Dreams of Gentleman Jack" from ADVENTURE #85
April, 1943 ..... ((492))

SHAZAM:

The Twisted Powers" from CAPTAIN MARVEL ADVENTURES #50
Dec., 1945 ..... ((493))

THE SPECTRE:

"The War That Shook the Universe" from SHOWCASE #60,
Jan.-Feb., 1966 ..... ((491))
"Beyond the Sinister Barrier" from SHOWCASE #61
March-April, 1966 ..... ((492))
"The Ghost of Ace Chance" from SHOWCASE #64,
Sept.-Oct., 1966 ..... ((493))
Zatanna in "A Nightmare Called Gorgonus" from ADVENTURE #419,
May, 1972 ..... ((493))

Further listings will appear in ADVENTURE #500. Forty-nine years in the making and worth the wait!

—Carl Gafford

THE SPECTRE!

I SPLIT THE *SPECTRE* IN TWO! I--I CAN'T BELIEVE IT!

ACE CHANCE WAS A GAMBLER, A CHEAT, A CON MAN-- AND A *LOSER*!

IN DESPERATION, HE TOOK THE BIGGEST GAMBLE OF HIS LIFE-- ONLY TO HAVE IT COST HIM HIS LIFE!

YET, STRANGELY ENOUGH, HIS VERY DEATH GAVE HIM THE BIGGEST BREAK HE EVER HAD-- TO BE A *WINNER*-- WHEN HE BECAME--

STORY: GARDNER FOX
ART: MURPHY ANDERSON

THE GHOST OF ACE CHANCE!

ABOARD A GAMBLING SHIP, ACE CHANCE IS ALL SET TO MAKE A KILLING AT ROULETTE...

MY MIND'S MADE UP! THIS IS MY LAST FLING WITH "LADY LUCK"! STARTING TOMORROW, ACE CHANCE FADES FROM THE SCENE AND EMBARKS ON A NEW LIFE...

HOPE I'M LUCKY TONIGHT-- I OWE BOOTH CODY TEN GRAND! BUT TEN G'S ARE PEANUTS COMPARED TO WHAT I'M GOING TO HAVE-- AFTER I COURT AND MARRY MONA MARCY--THE WORLD'S WEALTHIEST WOMAN!

AS THE PILE OF CHIPS BEFORE HIM SHRINKS AND SHRINKS, ACE DREAMS ON...

OF COURSE, AS OF THIS MOMENT, MONA MARCY DOESN'T EVEN KNOW ME--OR MY PLANS TO BE HER FUTURE HUSBAND-- BUT I'M HANDSOME, SMART AND LOADED WITH CHARM! HOW CAN I MISS?

SHORTLY PAST MIDNIGHT, HE STEPS INTO THE SHIP'S TENDER AND RIDES TOWARD THE DOCKSIDE OF GATEWAY CITY...

I LOST MY LAST CENT! TOO BAD FOR BOOTH CODY! HE DOESN'T GET HIS TEN GRAND! MY BAD LUCK WAS HIS BAD LUCK!

HIS FEET STRIKE HOLLOW ECHOES ON THE WATERFRONT (...) AS...

HERE COMES CHANCE NOW!

BOOTH'LL GET HIS MONEY'S WORTH-- WITH INTEREST!

A CRY IN THE NIGHT-- THE THUD OF HEAVY BLOWS...

NO-- NO! AAAAAGHH!

NOT FAR AWAY, CAPTAIN OF DETECTIVES JIM CORRIGAN IS CHECKING THE DOORS OF THE MARINE MUSEUM...

I GOT A TIP THIS PLACE IS GOING TO BE ROBBED TONIGHT BUT EVERY-THING SEEMS--

WHAT'S THAT?

HELP!

TWO MEN--CARRYING A SLUMPED FIGURE UP ONTO THAT TANK OF LIQUID GAS!

BEFORE THE FAR-OFF DETECTIVE CAN INTER-VENE...

THE NATURAL GAS THEY SHIP FROM ALASKA IS SO COLD-- IT'S LIKE *LIQUID!*

YEAH! THAT'S WHAT HE GETS FOR TRYIN' TO FREEZE BOOTH OCULY OUTTA HIS HORSE RACE BETS!

I--AM--DEAD! I FEEL A TUGGING FORCE PULLING A GHOSTLY SHAPE OUT OF MY BODY...

I SENSE--SOMEHOW-- I'M BEING DRAWN AWAY FROM EARTH- TOWARD A MYSTIC REALM-- A SORT OF HEREAFTER..

AS THE STRONGARM BOYS FLEE...

HOLD IT! DON'T YOU GUYS KNOW YOU CAN'T GET AWAY WITH MURDER?

HOLD IT! WHEN YOU MAKE ME SAY IT TWICE, I GET TWICE AS TOUGH!

TROUBLE WITH YOU PUNKS IS-- YOU CAN'T FIGHT UNLESS YOU DO IT IN PACKS!

OR WHEN YOU HAVE A GUN IN YOUR HAND!

KRUNK

THERE'LL BE NO TROUBLE HAND-CUFFING 'EM NOW!

DETECTIVE CORRIGAN REACHES DOWN FOR HIS PRISONER--LIP FROM HIS BODY RISES THE DISCARNATE SHAPE OF THE EERIE BEING KNOWN AS--*THE SPECTRE*..

MY ASTRAL POWERS TELL ME THERE IS STILL A SPARK OF LIFE IN THE BODY OF *ACE CHANCE*! GOT TO GET TO HIM BEFORE IT PETERS OUT...

STEEL WALLS ARE NO BARRIER TO THE *DISEMBODIED DETECTIVE*...

I'LL ENTER INTO HIS FROZEN SHAPE--REVITALIZE THE FAINT LIFE-SPARK IF POSSIBLE!

HIS SPIRIT-BEING IS ALREADY GONE--THE LIFE-FORCE IN HIS BODY WAS TOO WEAK TO HOLD IT!

NEXT INSTANT--THE *GHOST OF ACE CHANCE*--ON ITS WAY TO THE MYSTIC REALM...

ANOTHER FORCE--YANKING ME BACK TOWARD MY BODY!

AS THE GAMBLER'S BODY RISES UPWARD FROM THE TANK OF LIQUEFIED GAS..

THAT'S MY PHYSICAL BODY--BUT I'M UNABLE TO RETURN INTO IT! THERE'S ANOTHER SPIRIT INSIDE IT--AND TWO SPIRIT SHAPES CANNOT INHABIT THE SAME BODY!

A MENTAL WAIL OF TERROR AND DESPAIR ARISES FROM THE *GHOST OF ACE CHANCE* AS IT IS WHIPPED ABOUT BY THE OPPOSING, TUGGING FORCES OF THE MYSTIC REALM AND ITS OWN BODY...

I'M--BEING--WRENCHED--APART! IF I DON'T GET INSIDE A HUMAN BODY SOON--I'LL BE DISSIPATED FOREVER!

I NEED A *HOST BODY*-- QUICK! AHH-- I CAN SENSE SUCH A WARM, LIVING BODY--NOT FAR AWAY! I MUST ENTER IT-- AND LIVE ON!

AND SO--AS DETECTIVE-CAPTAIN JIM CORRIGAN HANDCUFFS HIS PRISONERS...

HOW ODD THAT THIS MAN SHOULD HAVE NO INNER SPIRIT! BUT--OF COURSE! THIS IS THE HOST BODY FOR--*THE SPECTRE*! ONCE I'M IN IT--*THE SPECTRE* WILL BE CUT OFF FROM HIS OWN BODY!

UNWITTINGLY UNDER THE CONTROL OF THE MYSTIC POWERS OF THE GAMBLER'S GHOST, JIM CORRIGAN HURRIES TOWARD HIS CAR AND...

WHAT AN UNEXPECTED DEVELOPMENT! I FIGURED TO ASSUME A NEW IDENTITY--BUT NEVER IMAGINED IT WOULD HAPPEN *THIS* WAY! I'LL MAKE MY PITCH FOR MONA MARCY--*AS JIM CORRIGAN*!

MOMENTS LATER, *THE SPECTRE* IS AMAZED TO SEE HIS ALTER EGO SPEED AWAY FROM THE SCENE...

MY HUMAN SELF LEAVING THE PREMISES--ALONE? HAS JIM FORGOTTEN THE TIP HE RECEIVED ABOUT A MUSEUM ROBBERY HERE?

THESE HOODLUMS! ODD HE SHOULD JUST LEAVE THEM HERE! AND WHY DIDN'T HE CALL AN AMBULANCE TO PICK UP *ACE CHANCE* AND RUSH HIM TO A HOSPITAL? GUESS **I'LL** HAVE TO FINISH UP HERE!

THEN--AT A NEARBY PRECINCT HOUSE...

LOOK--IT'S *THE SPECTRE* HANDING OVER A COUPLE OF BAD ONES!

BOOK 'EM FOR ASSAULT AND BATTERY, OFFICERS! I HAVE TO RUSH A MAN OVER TO THE HOSPITAL!

AT THE MARINE MUSEUM SOMEWHAT LATER...

THESE JEWELS RECOVERED FROM SHIP-WRECKS ALL ACROSS THE WORLD ARE WORTH MILLIONS!

STOP TALKING AND START TAKING!

[LATER IN THE HEART OF TWO MAGNIFICENT RUBIES' FIRE LIGHTS GLOW...

HEYY--THEM GEMS ARE--STARING UP AT ME--LIKE A PAIR OF EYES!

YIII! A F-FACE F-FORMING AROUND THE EYES--!

NOW A HAND -- AND IT'S F-FLYING AT ME -- GUHHGOG!!

KRAP!

THE SPECTRE! I'LL PUMP YOU SO FULLA LEAD--YOU'LL BE TOP-HEAVY!

; ULP ; HE TURNED THE BULLETS TO PUFFS OF SMOKE !

THE SMOKE -- HITTING ME -- FEELS LIKE SOLID LEAD !

I'LL ANCHOR HIM TO THE FLOOR !

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THE GHOST OF ACE CHANCE PART 2

THE SHARP FLANGE OF THE OLD SEA ANCHOR CLEAVES THE AIR...

I SPLIT THE SPECTRE IN TWO! I--I CAN'T BELIEVE IT!

WHY SHOULD YOU, RASH IMMORTAL!

I DIVIDED MY OWN BODY IN HALF-- AN INSTANT BEFORE YOUR ANCHOR STRUCK!

AS THE GHOSTLY GUARDIAN RE-JOINS HIS BODY SEGMENTS, A BOLT OF LIGHTNING FLASHES....

AAAAGHH!

THEN--AS THE TWO POLICE OFFICERS EMERGE FROM BOOKING THE BOOTH COPY HOODS...

THE SPECTRE'S AT IT AGAIN! HE'S BROUGHT US THREE MORE--

THE CHARGE IS ATTEMPTED ROBBERY THIS TIME!

WHY SHOULD ALL THIS ACTIVITY WEAKEN ME SO? I BETTER RETURN INTO MY HOST BODY-- RENEW MY SPECTRAL POWERS--

OH..? WHAT'S THAT?

THE GROUND IS QUIVERING, BUILDINGS STARTING TO SHAKE! A TERRIBLY DESTRUCTIVE EARTHQUAKE IS UNDER WAY! MY JIM CORRIGAN CONTACT WILL HAVE TO WAIT...

DOWNWARD INTO THE TREMBLING EARTH SINKS THE DISCARNATE DETECTIVE--DEEP INTO THE SOLID OUTER MANTLE AND PLASTIC INNER ZONE BELOW GATEWAY CITY...

THE PRESSURES THAT BUILD DEEP IN THE PLANET'S MOLTEN CORE CAUSE THE EARTH'S CRUST TO SHIFT AT TIMES, RESULTING IN VIBRATIONS THAT CAUSE TREMORS AND EARTHQUAKES...

BUT BY ACTING AS A SAFETY VALVE-- I CAN RELIEVE THOSE PRESSURES BY LETTING OFF THOSE ENERGIES AS STEAM!

KREEEEEEEEEE

NOW TO PUSH THOSE ROCK FAULTS BACK TOGETHER-- CEMENT THEM WITH MY SPECTRAL ENERGIES--SO THEY CAN'T SLIDE APART AGAIN!

[illegible] HALF-MAD OUT OF THIS WORLD...

A TORNADO! AND GATEWAY CITY IS RIGHT IN ITS PATH! I--I USED UP CONSIDERABLE POWER STOPPING THAT EARTHQUAKE! I HOPE I HAVE ENOUGH LEFT--

AS A FOLLOWER EXECUTES A "[illegible]," SO THE GHOSTLY GUARDIAN FLASHES HIS CAPE...

I'LL LURE THE TORNADO AFTER MY CLOAK--LET IT WASTE ITS FURIES IN THE OPEN FIELDS! TAKING SUCH DEEP CONCENTRATION TO DO THIS! NEVER FELT SO WEAK BEFORE...

AND THEN--EVEN AS THE REVOLVING VORTEX HARMLESSLY SWIRLS AWAY...

eh? NOW WHAT? TREES--APPARENTLY GONE WILD! REACHING OUT THEIR BRANCHES TO GRAB ME--STRANGLE ME!

THE WONDER WRAITH CALLS UPON HIS UNWINDING ENDS OF ENERGY TO FEED THEIR CRUNCHING BRANCHES--SNAP AND WRENCH THEM APART...

SO MANY DISASTERS HAPPENING--ONE AFTER THE OTHER! IT CAN'T BE COINCIDENCE! SOMEONE IS CAUSING THEM--AND INVOLVING ME! BUT--WHY?

THERE--THAT'LL SAVE THE LUMBERJACKS THE TROUBLE OF CHOPPING DOWN THOSE TREES! NOW--BACK TO JIM CORRIGAN--IF I CAN...

KAPPP!

AS A COOL NIGHT WIND BLOWS THE SPECTRE ALONG...

JIM'S AT POLICE HEADQUARTERS...

A SPECTRE-ACULAR ENTRANCE OF POLICE HEADQUARTERS WHERE...

I'M TURNING IN MY SHIELD! FOR TWENTY-ODD YEARS I'VE WASTED MY TALENTS AS A DETECTIVE! NOW I'M GOING TO THINK OF ME FIRST!

WHAT'S THIS? HAS JIM FLIPPED--?

RESIGNING FROM THE POLICE FORCE? WHAT'S GOT INTO YOU?

I'M TIRED OF YOU TOO, SPECTRE! GO HAUNT A HOUSE OR SOMETHING!

I'LL PUT A QUICK STOP TO THIS BY ENTERING YOUR BODY AND--OHHH! SHADES OF PLUTO! I--I CAN'T GET INSIDE YOU!

GOOD! GO RUSTLE UP ANOTHER HOST! GET LOST!

SOME OTHER SPIRIT-BEING HAS DISPLACED ME IN HIS BODY! IS THAT THE REASON I'VE BEEN SO TERRIBLY WEAKENED BY MY BATTLES WITH THE EARTHQUAKE, TORNADO AND TREES--SO I CAN'T FORCE MY WAY BACK IN?

TO MAKE MATTERS WORSE, AS I TRIED TO ENTER JIM CORRIGAN--I SENSED A STRONG BARRIER OF *SINISTER ENERGY* ABOUT HIS BODY, AS IF THE SPIRIT-BEING WITHIN HIM HAD DRAWN ON THE ENTIRE EVIL OF THE WORLD TO PROTECT ITSELF FROM ME!

THAT SPIRIT-BEING MUST KNOW--AS I KNOW--THAT EVIL DEEDS GENERATE A SPECIAL RADIATION-ENERGY OF TREMENDOUS POWER! WEAK AND ALONE AS I AM--I'M UNABLE TO PENETRATE THE EVIL-ENERGY BARRIER AND COME TO GRIPS WITH THAT SPIRIT INSIDE JIM'S BODY..

BUT I KNOW WHERE I CAN GET HELP! FOR JUST AS EVIL CREATES ITS OWN UNIQUE ENERGY--SO DO *GOOD DEEDS* GIVE RISE TO A *GOOD RADIATION*, WHICH KEEPS THE EVIL ENERGY IN CHECK!

HI.. [illegible] DOWNMARD TO A JUNGLE CLEARING WHERE A *PEACE CORPS* WORKER IS LEND A HAND TO TURN FOR THE NURSES...

I'LL WRAP THIS GOOD RADIATION ABOUT ME--THEN DRAW ON IT LATER!

A RELIGIOUS SERVICE--

TO A HOSPITAL...

ALL THIS GOOD SHALL BE USED TO FIGHT EVIL...

13

WHILE THE SPIRIT SLEUTH HAS BEEN SCOURING THE WORLD TO GAIN PSYCHIC STRENGTH, HIS ALTER EGO JIM CORRIGAN HAS BEEN CONDUCTING A WHIRLWIND, GHOST-CONTROLLED CAMPAIGN TO WOO AND WIN A WIFE...

WELCOME AND CHARMING--DOMINATED BY THE SINISTER PROMPTINGS OF THE GHOST OF ACE CHANCE--JIM CORRIGAN IS READY TO "POP THE QUESTION"...

MY FORTUNE-HUNTING DAYS ARE OVER...

THEN--OUT OF THE NIGHT--STRENGTHENED BY THE GOOD DEED RADIATIONS--COMES THE SPECTRE...

NOW TO SEE WHETHER THAT EVIL BARRIER AROUND JIM CORRIGAN CAN WITHSTAND THE GOOD RADIATION I'VE ABSORBED!

THE GHOST OF AGE CHANCE PART 3

THE DISCARNATE ENTITY AND [illegible] HIS DIGITS DEEP INTO THE FRAME OF JIM CORRIGAN! HIS SPECTRAL FINGERS TIGHTEN -- YANK OUT AND UPWARD -- BRINGING THE GHOST OF AGE CHANCE WITH THEM! AS THESE PSYCHIC PERSONALITIES COME INTO CONFLICT, THE BODY OF THE DETECTIVE-CAPTAIN SLUMPS UNCONSCIOUS, UNABLE TO WITHSTAND THEIR AWESOME FORCES!

OUT OF THERE -- YOU SQUATTER!

BENEATH THE STRUGGLING SHAPES, THE WICKED FINGERS -- SUMMONED CHANCE'S SHADE ...

SPECTRE -- KNOW THAT I NOW POSSESS THE KNOWLEDGE OF THE AGES! NOTHING IS BEYOND MY POWERS TO ACCOMPLISH! WITNESS WHAT I AM CAUSING TO HAPPEN BELOW!

THE EERIE TRANSFORMATION ENDS, AND GOLD ALLEY--THAT MYSTIC STREET OF THE ALCHEMISTS IN PRAGUE--TAKES SHAPE...

I HAVE LEARNED MUCH FROM THE EVIL ENERGIES OF EARTH! NOW I SHALL PUT MY NEFARIOUS WISDOM TO WORK--BY CALLING ON THE BASILISKS TO DESTROY YOU!

HA! HA! HA! WHILE THOSE LIZARDS FROM THE INFERNAL PITS PULVERIZE YOUR PSYCHIC SHAPE, I'LL BE ON MY WAY TO WIN A WIFE--AND THEN A WORLD!

RIP

KRAAKK

YOU'RE NOT LEAVING YET, GHOST! I NEED YOU TO OVERCOME THESE BASILISKS!

GOT TO ESCAPE HIS CLUTCHES--CARRY OUT MY SCHEME!

IN THE MIGHTY HAND OF THE *SPIRIT SLEUTH*--THE *GHOST OF ACE CHANCE* BECOMES A LIVING CLUB WITH WHICH TO DISPEL DEMONS...

I'LL USE SOME OF THAT EVIL ENERGY IN YOU--TO OVERCOME THOSE EVIL BEINGS YOU'VE ALLIED YOURSELF WITH!

AAAA

THE CHAPEL OF **SECAIRE**--THE SITE OF BLACK MASSES AND DEMON WORSHIP IN THE PAST! ENERGIES CLUSTER ABOUT ITS FIRE-DARKENED WALLS. AND EVEN TODAY, THE MEMBERS OF CERTAIN SECRET CULTS STILL USE THOSE BLASPHEMOUS RUINS FOR MODERN MISCHIEF...

WINGS FLAPPING, THESE MODERN DEVOTEES OF EVIL HURL THEMSELVES UPON THE **GHOSTLY GUARDIAN**, WEARING WEAPONS OF THEIR MAGIC ARTS...

AS UNHOLY EXCALIBUR AND RITUAL LUNAR SWORD, AS PSYCHIC SICKLE, TRIDENT AND THE GOLDEN RING OF GYGES STRIKE HIM--AN EERIE WEAKNESS SUCKS THROUGH THE SPECTRE...

SWACK

THEIR EVIL--SO ABSOLUTE--SO OVERPOWERING--BLOTTING OUT MY ASTRAL SENSES!

WHOOP

CARROO

DESPERATELY, THE SPECTRAL SLEUTH REACHES OUT-- BREAKS OFF THE DREAD ALTAR OF SACRIFICE...

I NEED A WEAPON-- TO FIGHT EVIL WITH EVIL!

KRAK!

NOW I'M FREE TO PROCEED WITH MY PLAN...

THE WORLD'S ONE EVIL ARTIFACT [illegible] THEIR NEW-AWAKENED POWERS IN A FLARE OF LETHAL LIGHT) ...

AS SPARKS FLARE WHEN TWO LIVE WIRES TOUCH-- SO ARE EVIL ENERGIES RELEASED WHEN THESE OBJECTS COME IN CONTACT!

KRAKABLAM!!

STAY YOUR FLIGHT, YOU WHO WERE *ACE CHANCE!* WE HAVE NOT YET FINISHED OUR BATTLE!

I MUST ESCAPE! I'LL CONJURE UP ANOTHER FIGHTING FORCE!

NO!

STRUGGLING FURIOUSLY, THE GHOST-BEING CALLS UPON THE WITCHES AND WARLOCKS OF EARTH--THOSE PRACTITIONERS OF ANCIENT EVIL WHO STILL LURK IN REMOTE CORNERS OF THE [illegible]...

BY THE EVIL THAT GIVES YOU POWER-- SLAY THIS SPECTRE BY FIRE-FLOWER!

MAN!

IN ANSWER TO THAT SUMMONS, WITCHES AND WARLOCKS ALIKE CHANT THE OLD SPELL WHICH DRAWS THE FLAMES OF EVIL FROM THE AIR...

FIRE BURN AND FIRE PLAY-- EVIL CREEP AND EVIL STRAY! SEEK OUT HIM WHOM YOU SHALL SLAY-- LET NOTHING GOOD STAND IN YOUR WAY!

A FIRE-FLOWER RISES SKYWARD-- BLAZING PETALS GAPING WIDE TO ENVELOP AND DEVOUR *THE SPECTRE* WITHIN THEIR FLAMING CLASP...

THOSE FIRES WILL FOLLOW YOU NO MATTER WHERE YOU GO, *SPECTRE!* THERE IS NO ESCAPE FROM THEM!

HA! HA! HA!

HIGH UP RISES THE GHOSTLY GUARDIAN-- LARGE GROW HIS HANDS AS...

NOT YET! I BRING THESE COLD CLOUDS TOGETHER-- POUR OUT SOME OF THE GOOD ENERGIES I HAVE ABSORBED INTO THEM...

...AND AS THE COLD CLOUDS GATHER ABOVE THE HOT FIRE-FLOWER-- THEY DRENCH ITS EVIL IN A RAIN OF GOODNESS...

I HAVE YOU NOW!

BUT NOT FOR LONG! I'VE NOT RUN OUT OF TRICKS YET--

UP AND AWAY WE GO IN THIS SOLAR BOAT, SPECTRE! IT WILL CARRY US INTO THE EXILES BETWEEN THE STARS WHERE PRIMEVAL DEMON GODS DWELL--EVER SINCE THEY WERE BANISHED FROM THE HAUNTS OF MEN!

YOUR DOOM IS AT HAND, SPECTRA! HERE COMES WINGED SORABORU, ELEMENTAL BEING ONCE WORSHIPPED BY EARTH PAGANS...

EVEN I WITH ALL MY POWERS COULD NEVER DEFEAT THIS HORRIBLE LOOKING CREATURE! BUT WITH MY EVERY VICTORY OVER THE FORCES OF EVIL WHICH THE GHOST OF ACE CHANCE SUMMONED UP AGAINST ME--I GROW STRONGER AND STRONGER IN EXISTENCE! NOW I AM ABLE TO FIGHT SORABORU--AND WIN!

THERE YOU SHALL STAY--FROZEN TO INERTNESS, ALL LIFE INSIDE YOU AT A STANDSTILL--FOREVER-MORE!

A SOB OF MINGLED HATE AND DESPAIR DISTENDS THE THROAT OF THAT-WHICH-WAS *ACE CHANCE* ...

NOW THAT I'VE DRAINED YOU OF THE EVIL ENERGIES YOU ABSORBED ON EARTH-- BACK YOU GO WHERE YOU BELONG -- INSIDE THE BODY OF *ACE CHANCE*-- WHERE YOU'LL LOSE YOUR SUPER-NATURAL POWERS AND BE YOUR NORMAL SELF!

WHAT A FOOL I'VE BEEN! I JUST NOW REALIZED HOW TO DEFEAT *THE SPECTRE*-- BUT IT'S TOO LATE! OR--IS IT?

TOWARD THE HOSPITAL WHERE *ACE CHANCE* IS RECUPERATING COMES THE *WONDER WRAITH* AND HIS PRISONER...

HOW IS ACE CHANCE, DOCTOR?

ALL OF A SUDDEN HE MADE A COMPLETE RECOVERY. IT'S AMAZING!

GOOD! THEN IN YOU GO, GHOST!

MY TRICK WORKED! IN A FEW MOMENTS *THE SPECTRE* SHALL BE OVERCOME!

AS *SPECTRE* CARRIED ME HERE-- BY THE LAST TRACE OF EVIL ENERGY STILL WITHIN ME--I SUMMONED THE BODY OF *JIM CORRIGAN* HERE AND TELEPORTED THE BODY OF *ACE CHANCE* BACK TO *CORRIGAN'S* PLACE!

TO CONCEAL THE SWITCH-OVER, I CREATED AN ILLUSION OF MY FORMER BODY--SO JIM CORRIGAN WOULD *LOOK* LIKE ACE CHANCE! *THE SPECTRE* CANNOT POSSIBLY KNOW THIS--SO WHEN HE PUTS ME INSIDE *HIS* BODY--I'LL REGAIN MY FORMER POWERS AND--DESTROY HIM!

SUDDENLY, THE *GHOSTLY GUARDIAN* LEANS FORWARD AND FASTENS HIS POWERFUL HANDS UPON THE "ILLUSION" CREATED BY THE *GHOST OF ACE CHANCE*...

NO, NO! WHAT ARE YOU DOING?

I'M REMOVING THE *ILLUSION* YOU PLACED OVER THE BODY OF JIM CORRIGAN TO TRICK ME INTO PUTTING YOU INTO IT!

COME ALONG! I'M PUTTING YOU WHERE YOU BELONG-IN YOUR OWN BODY!

HOW DID YOU KNOW? HOW *COULD* YOU HAVE KNOWN?

AS THE *DISCARNATE DETECTIVE* THRUSTS THE SPIRIT-BEING BACK INTO THE BODY OF *ACE CHANCE*... YOU FOOLED THE DOCTOR AND ME--BUT YOU COULDN'T FOOL THE *LAMP* ON THE NIGHT TABLE! *WE* SAW *ACE CHANCE*--BUT THE *LAMP* THREW THE PROFILE-SHADOW OF *JIM CORRIGAN* ON THE SCREEN FORTUNATELY, I SAW IT--JUST IN TIME!

LATER, AFTER *ACE CHANCE* WITH HIS NOW-HARMLESS SPIRIT-BEING HAS BEEN RETURNED TO THE HOSPITAL FOR FURTHER TREATMENT...

CANCELLING MY RESIGNATION FROM THE POLICE FORCE WILL BE EASY--BUT WHAT AM I GOING TO DO ABOUT *MONA MARCY*? SHE'S EXPECTING *ME* TO *PROPOSE* TO HER!

YOU GOT YOURSELF INTO THAT HOLE, JIM--SO YOU'LL HAVE TO DIG YOUR OWN WAY OUT OF IT!

THE END

THE STORY BEHIND THE STORIES:

Our chronological reprinting of the adventures of the Legion of Super-Heroes rolls on this month with their fifth and sixth appearances. For those of you who wonder when the Legion series will begin being reprinted, have patience—it was their *fourteenth* story that headlined ADVENTURE COMICS #300 and launched them to greatness.

Our first selection, "Lana Lang and the Legion of Super-Heroes" from ADVENTURE COMICS #282, March, 1961, is a curious case. Readers will note that Star Boy is really the only Legionnaire who appears, and he demonstrates powers very much unlike those he currently possesses (which, in fact, are the powers he's used in every *other* appearance he's ever made). A simple explanation can be found by opening ADVENTURE COMICS #195, December, 1953 and looking at "Lana Lang's Romance On Mars"—almost the same story featuring a hero named Marsboy who gained powers identical to Superboy's from a strange comet.

Then Superman family editor Mort Weisinger frequently "updated" old stories by polishing the scripts and giving them to new artists to work on, and this was the story behind Star Boy's debut. The introduction of the Legion to the story was almost accidental—just a way of working it into the Superman mythos more firmly. Interestingly Weisinger would do the same thing again only a few months later when Sun Boy was introduced in a story that updated another ADVENTURE story from the fifties.

No one knows whether Weisinger did this to balance tight budgets, tight deadlines or both, or whether occasionally the writers themselves volunteered the updating. However, in the years before reprints became common and when collecting back issues was unknown, it seemed harmless.

We never saw Zynthia, Star Boy's girl friend from this story again (her equivalent in the earlier story was Cytherea)... and as you probably know, he fell for Dream Girl the minute she joined the Legion.

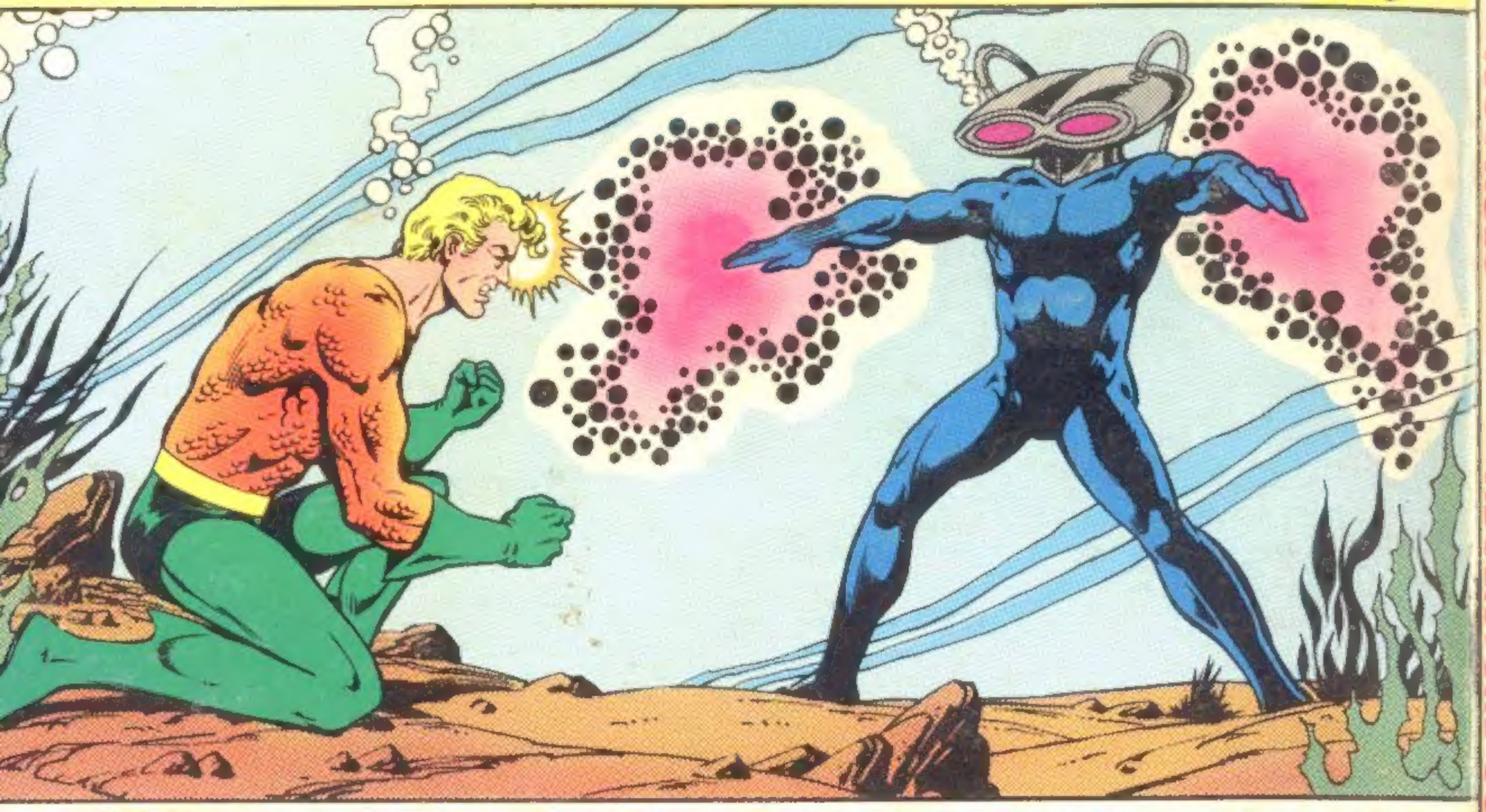
Our other selection, "Supergirl's Three Super Girl Friends" from ACTION COMICS #276, May, 1961, was a very important Legion story. Besides Supergirl and Brainiac Five joining the Legion (and developing crushes on each other), it featured the first appearances of Triplicate Girl (later known as Duo Damsel after Computo killed one of her three selves), Phantom Girl, Brainy, and "applicants" Shrinking Violet, Bouncing Boy and Sun Boy, all of whom apparently joined shortly thereafter.

This story eliminated the previous Supergirl-Legion encounter's strange error of calling the Legionnaires "children" of the original team, although it added the new confusion of claiming Legionnaires all had super-powers because their parents came from other worlds. It also purported that Legion try-outs were held but once a year, a rule carried over from Supergirl's first try-out but which vanished after this story.

Costumes were settled into their permanent form by these two stories, and author Otto Binder, creator of the Legion, clearly had grown fond of his characters. But each new story Weisinger bought was clearly designed to add to the legends of the characters... they were not allowed "just" to star in stories. Maybe that was part of the magic that kept them alive...

—Paul Levitz

AQUAMAN FACE-TO-FACE WITH HIS GREATEST FOE: BLACK MANTA!



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